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ABSTRACT

This book, part of the Touchstones to Local History project of Russell Sage College, is designed for social studies teachers seeking to incorporate local history in their social studies curricula by utilizing local history materials. Ten forms of historical materials are reviewed in terms of their classroom use: published resources, personal papers, business records, organizational records, local government records, census records, cartographic records, newspapers, pictorial sources, and the artifacts of material culture. Though many of the illustrative examples are drawn from materials of the Upper Hudson region of New York State and their repositories, their treatment is intended for teachers throughout New York State and the nation. Each chapter contains five basic parts designed to bridge the gap between classroom materials and classroom activities. The first section of each chapter reviews the variety of materials that can be used. The second section of each chapter provides information on specific collections within the Upper Hudson region, so that area school teachers can quickly access them for classroom use. The third section of each chapter includes a discussion of educational skills and understanding. A special supplement to each chapter suggests learning activities that can be developed by teachers to utilize the learning potential of materials through class projects and individual student assignments. Finally, each chapter contains a concise bibliography of suggested readings for the teacher, indicating the appropriate reference works, finding aids, and illustrative readings needed to begin preparing lesson and unit plans. (DB)

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Local History in the Classroom:

A Teacher's Guide to Historical Materials and their Classroom Use

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Part of Touchstones to Local History
Sponsored by the Upper Hudson Program
Russell Sage College, Troy, New York

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Local History in the Classroom: A Teacher's Guide to Historical Materials and their Classroom Use

by
Kathleen Roe and James Corsaro

with an Introduction by
Stephen L. Schechter

and a Special Contribution by
John Poinak
for
Touchstones to Local History
Sponsored by the Upper Hudson Program
of Russell Sage College

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As Project Director, Stephen Schechter provided positive collegial support and the occasional cheerful bludgeoning necessary. John Crowl was a superbly patient, thoughtful editor, whose careful work made it possible to preserve our thoughts while making them presentable. Darcy Oman made the initial grant application a reality, and initiated us into the mysteries of budgets and timetables. John Polnak and Russell Dowda provided special insights into material culture and oral history for the participants of our institutes.

We also extend our thanks to the energetic Dean Robert Pennock and the staff of Russell Sage College's Evening Division for their affable efficiency in attending to the myriad of administrative details. The Saratoga-Warren County BOCES and Hudson High School willingly provided their facilities and access to vast quantities of coffee for two of our institutes.

The greatest debt we owe is to the teachers who attended our summer institutes. Despite the siren call of summer sunshine, they were enthusiastic, creative, and of unfailing good humor. It was richly rewarding to work with these individuals. They are clear evidence that local history studies are alive and well in the Upper Hudson. We hope this publication will help others to join their ranks.

List of Contributors

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Introduction

Local history is both a subject of and an approach to the social studies curriculum. As a subject, the study of local history can focus not only on the development of local communities within a state and national setting but also on the ways in which national developments are played out within the community. Put differently, teachers may begin their students on a history of their community, which will undoubtedly produce wider connections--through the migrations of local families, the expansion of local businesses, and the careers of local politicians; or, teachers may begin their students on the history of a national movement or an ethnic group, which can then be traced back to its local roots. Wherever the teacher begins, local history is an unavoidable subject of social studies because local communities are an integral part of the American system and its history.

As an approach to the social studies curriculum, local history is part of a growing movement to "humanize education" by teaching subjects *of human scale*. Conceptions of what is "local" and what constitutes a "community," are part of the socialization process that seems to occur by osmosis, varying, in quite interesting ways, across the country. In big cities, "community" may be equated with neighborhoods, while in other places "community history" may s ide back and forth from town to county histories. However defined, the history of one's local community can provide an invigorating approach to studying how those before us coped, or failed to cope, with the kinds of human challenges--of frontier survival, raising a family, rising in station, acquiring rights and responsibilities, and meeting the unexpected--that can be compared with the challenges facing the families and communities of today's students. In this respect, local history provides the setting, literally *a place of human scale*, and a laboratory of familiar objects, for investigating the workings of otherwise abstract relationships--of person to person, individual and society, challenge and response, materials and molders--that form the "study" of social studies.

Recognizing the importance of local history, the State of New York has recently mandated revisions of the social studies curriculum designed to integrate local studies on many levels. In particular, the fourth grade curriculum, beginning in Fall 1982 is to consist specifically of local history and local government studies. Further revisions call for using local events as examples in the seventh grade study of New York State history, eighth grade American history, and eleventh grade American studies. In addition to these mandated courses of study, local history is identified as one of the high school elective courses. As is evident from these revisions, preparation to teach local history is essential for

elementary school teachers, and highly desirable for junior high and high school teachers.

This publication, *Local History in the Classroom,* is one product of a fourteen month effort to assist teachers in the Upper Hudson region to prepare for the challenges of incorporating local history in their social studies curriculum. The chapters of this publication were originally prepared for use by teachers in three Institutes on the Teaching of Local History, held at various locations during Summer 1982. Based on this experience and the feedback of nearly 100 teachers, the chapters were revised and expanded to bridge the gap between classroom materials and activities. The chapters were then subjected to a second review by teachers and editors.

Throughout this review process, we have been encouraged to retain the material-oriented approach of the original effort as a means of maintaining its practical utility for teachers. This book can of course, be used by historians, teachers of teachers, and others involved in academe; however, it is especially designed for the social studies teacher seeking to utilize historical materials in teaching local history. Ten forms of historical material are reviewed in terms of their classroom use: published resources, personal papers, business records, organizational records, local government records, census records, cartographic records, newspapers, pictorial sources, and material culture. Though many of the illustrative examples are drawn from Upper Hudson materials and their repositories, their treatment is intended for teachers throughout New York State and the country.

Each chapter contains five basic parts designed to bridge the gap between classroom materials and classroom activities. The first section of each chapter reviews the variety of materials that can be used. For example, the chapter on personal papers discusses such materials as property records, household records (from shopping bills to recipes), vital statistics, personal correspondence, school records, and entertainment records. The second section of each chapter provides information on specific collections of materials on communities within the Upper Hudson region, so that area school teachers can quickly access them for classroom use.

The third section of each chapter includes a discussion of educational skills and understanding. Separately considered are the learning skills that working with the materials can build, and the content understanding that can be enhanced by utilizing them. Then, a special supplement to each chapter suggests learning activities that can be developed by teachers to utilize the learning potential of materials through class projects and individual student assignments. Finally, each chapter contains a concise bibliography of suggested readings for the teacher, indicating the appropriate reference works, finding aids, and illustrative readings needed to begin preparing lesson and unit plans.

In short, this is a book written by teachers for teachers, and the credit for its conception and preparation belongs to its authors, Kathleen Roe and James Corsaro. Both are particularly qualified for this undertaking, resting as it does on the integration of historical materials and educational instruction. Kathleen Roe, who conceived the idea for this project, received a Master's degree in History and a second Master's degree in Archival Administration, for which she wrote a thesis appropriately entitled "Using Archival Materials in Education." In the intervening decade, Kathleen Roe has continued to utilize the twin skills of archivist and teacher, first as a teacher in Indiana, and presently as an archivist at the New York State Archives. James Corsaro has studied elementary education and received degrees in history and library science. He has worked at the New York State Library for over fifteen years, where he has gained a state-wide reputation as one of the leading authorities on local manuscripts and special collections. Like Kathleen Roe he has taught at Russell Sage College and the State University of New York at Albany. John Polnak, the author of a special contribution on material culture, has received two Master's degrees--one in education, the other in museum education. He, too, has been a school teacher, and presently serves as director of education programs for the Albany Institute of History and Art.

Stephen L. Schechter

Glen's Falls Portland Cement is the Best Cement Made

Miller Charlotte A, widow John J, h 37 Ludlow
Clara, vestmaker, h 30 Railroad
Clarence F, emp Lincoln Spring, h 5 Pearl
De Witt P, expressman, bds 5 Pearl
Edd, farmer, h West ave nr Congress ave
Edgar Earl, emp 195 Lake ave, bds do, rooms 37 Ludlow
Edwin A, teamster, h 1 Pearl
Edwin A, jr, coachman, 88 Circular, bds 1 Pearl
Elizabeth, domestic, 471 Broadway
Francis A, watchman, G F Harvey Co, h 104 Van Dam
Fred, engineer, N Y C & G Co, h Cady Hill, The Geysers
Harriet M, widow John E, bds 173 Spring
John H, farmer, h West ave nr D & H R
John H, jr, bds West ave nr D & H R
Jurian, drug clerk, 472 Broadway, h 13 State
MILLER LAFAYETTE F, Miller & Faxon, h 57 State
Leopold, removed to Ballston Spa
Lizzie, widow Mathias J, cook, 25 Division, h 122 Van Dam
Mary J, widow John D, h Oak alley nr Van Dam
Nicholas, farmer, h 1 Congress ave
Riley, bds Wm H Ramsdill, Lake Lonely
Robert J, junk dealer, 25 Cowen, h 57 Maple ave
Sarah F, h 40 Maple ave
Shepherd B, genl bookkeeper, 21 Park, h s Van Dorn
Stephen, bds 1 Pearl
Stephen R, hackman, h 25 Clark
William H, carpenter, h 40 Maple ave
MILLER & FAXON, Lafayette F Miller and Sidney H Faxon, Saratoga Springs and Ballston Spa, wholesale and retail mnfrs and dealers in carriages, trunks and harness, 516-518 Broadway, Algonquin place See adv below

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PHELPS & SPAULDING Handle the Celebrated

*A page from the **Directory of Saratoga Springs** for 1901 listing some of the city's residents, their addresses and occupations, as well as an ad for custom-made harnesses, an important craft in Saratoga County. City directories are mines of such detailed information about communities.*

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I. Published Resources

Introduction

Perhaps the easiest local history materials to access, because of their familiar format, are published resources. Everyone is accustomed to using history books, gazetteers and pamphlets. Both students and teachers use them everyday in school, in the library and at home. This chapter describes some of the specific published resources which may be less familiar, but teachers will find them easy to apply to teaching the history of the Upper Hudson region.

This region has a long tradition of local historical studies, because it is one of the oldest settled areas in the nation, because of the variety of ethnic groups from Dutch to Irish who have settled here, and because of the varying work and workplaces found in the region, whether from farm to factory, or from blue collar to white collar.

Printing and publishing began in Albany with the first printing press in 1771, but travel accounts with descriptions of the area began much earlier during the Dutch period.

During the 19th century large numbers of publications were issued which have been especially helpful in studying local history. During the last ten years, due chiefly to Bicentennial fervor, there has been a resurgence of interest in and publishing of the story of how this region's towns, villages and cities grew and changed.

Kinds of Published Resources

There are six major types of published resources which may be found useful in the classroom instruction of local history.

Local Histories. During the late 19th century, several publishers issued large and very detailed histories of counties in New York State. In addition, histories of most of the state's cities and towns issued from both local and nationally known presses. This widespread publishing trend has been attributed to such factors as the reemergence of nationalist feeling at the end of the Civil War and local boosterism during the Centennial era after 1876, the latter factor repeating itself a century later during the Bicentennial years.

These 19th century local histories, though they usually lack any historical analysis of their communities' "life story," are still very useful chiefly for the detailed accounts which they provide of early settlement and development. They are an important source for biographical detail of both prominent and not so well-remembered settlers and citizens. Histories of this type were written about Albany County in 1886, Saratoga County in 1878 and Columbia County in 1878.

The Gilded Age in America is also known for its genealogical and biographical records, better known as "mug books." These, usually multi-volume, works contain biographical accounts of individual citizens, all of whom subscribed to them, assuring their publication. A neat way for a publisher to kill two birds with one stone! Of course, most of the biographies were of prominent and well-to-do citizens; and they were also all men, so these sources, sources, though they are frequently voluminous, are biased and should be used with a critical eye.

Twentieth century local histories, especially the Bicentennial pamphlet variety, although sometimes quite scholarly and analytic, are often not quite so useful as their 19th century counterpart, simply because they are not as large and detailed. They are, however, useful for filling in a community's modern history and also for correcting errors of fact and for rectifying dubious interpretations of local events perpetrated by their Victorian ancestors.

Histories have also often been written of churches, businesses and institutions of a community. Customarily, these works, compiled in honor of a special event, such as an anniversary celebration, will reflect the pride and bias to be expected of such material. However, they remain informative for the facts, names and dates which are related in the course of their celebratory remarks.

Genealogy or family history can be considered a part of local history, and in fact genealogists have always been strong supporters and promoters of it. Family history is also a personal way to introduce students to the study of their communities. Genealogical works, either published genealogies or transcriptions of genealogical records—such as cemetery, church, census, Bible and land records—are good sources for biographical information, family relationships, and family demography in a particular town or city.

Geographical Accounts. Because communities change and develop in direct relation to their geography, books of historical geography can explain such things as how a village got its name, why an industry began on the banks of a mountain stream and why a major modern road follows a particular path.

One of the primary sources of answers to such puzzles are gazetteers and, several of New York State were compiled in the 19th

century. Because gazetteers are discussed more completely in the chapter on cartographic records, it is sufficient to note here that gazetteers are aids for finding data on place names, early settlement, economic development, topographic features and brief historical accounts of localities in the Upper Hudson region.

Another source, both enlightening and entertaining to read, are early travel accounts about a city or town. Because the Upper Hudson was explored in very early colonial times, there are reports by Dutch traders and French Jesuit priests (most translated) describing the flora and fauna and the Indian societies they encountered. Later travelers, such as Peter Kalm in the mid-18th century and Jacques Milbert in 1827, wrote interesting and sometimes critical accounts of the region. These and other traveler's tales are worthy of attention mainly because they are written by outsiders and, though they reflect the bias of the writer, provide an alternative view of community life.

Not to be missed either are the memoirs by contemporaries of people and places in their town or city. Wonderful gossip, at times, and always an eyewitness account and opinion of local events. One good example of this type of literature is Mrs. Anne Grant's *Memoirs* of social life in Albany before the Revolution.

Pamphlet Literature. Not all the sources of regional history are to be found as oversize tomes. Instead, a great deal of interesting and pertinent material can be found in locally written and published pamphlets. Some traditional forms to look for are sermons, orations for holidays such as the 4th of July, essays on local economic and agricultural development, political tracts by local partisans and advertising catalogs by local organizations and businesses. However, do not overlook other possible subjects, since pamphlets were written on nearly any imaginable topic.

Because pamphlets commonly express strong opinions, complaints or demands, they are a good source for discovering what issues affected a community at particular times.

Pamphlets expressing the wishes of various citizens for an enlargement of the Erie Canal or demanding that no bridge be built across the Hudson River at Albany will explain a great deal about the economic interests of cities such as Troy and West Troy. A sermon castigating drinking and demanding prohibition of alcohol illuminates the moral climate of a 19th century village, and students may notice a similar concern today about the abuse of alcohol and drugs.

Very effective for discussing economic history with students are the trade catalogs published by manufacturers beginning in the mid-19th century. These catalogs are illustrated with pictures of the products which are described in detail including their prices. They may be found for goods as various as Albany stoves, West Troy bells, Troy horseshoes or any number of products.

Directories. City directories have been published in Albany since 1813, Troy since 1829, Hudson since 1851, and Saratoga Springs since 1868. In addition, there were county directories issued for Albany County in 1870, Columbia County in 1871, Saratoga County in 1871 and Rensselaer County in 1870. Directories are primarily useful for tracking a name or address, usually for genealogical purposes. However, they also include civil lists of government officials, lists of associations, charitable institutions and schools, besides large sections of illustrated business advertisements. Used in combination with census and other records, directories can be an interesting classroom tool in tracing economic change and development of urban areas.

Government Documents. Government in both New York State and Washington, D.C. has grown steadily with each passing year and is increasingly more involved in our everyday life. However, both state and federal government have always been concerned with the "general welfare" and their concern has led to studies, reports and legislation on a great variety of political, social and economic issues. The result of all this government labor is a vast quantity of published government documents, both federal and state.

When one checks state documents, many reports will be found on canal problems, prison building, maintenance of asylums and orphanages, turnpike construction and many other local economic issues. For example, the building of a toll road in Saratoga County and Albany County will be of interest to the state, and there may be documents related to it. The primary guide to state documents published before the 20th century is Adelaide R. Hasse's *Index of Economic Material in State Documents to 1904* (1905), which is available in all research libraries.

The federal government has created far more documents (in the millions) than New York, and there are several volumes which have been written just to explain the procedure for finding these source materials. However, most historical material is fairly well indexed and can be found with the help of a librarian. Federal documents about the Upper Hudson will be found on such topics as military affairs, transportation and industrial and commercial development.

Published Transcripts and Translations of Archival Material. Since the early 19th century a large amount of archival source material has been translated or transcribed and published. These copies are loaded with information and are an easily available source of primary historical documents. Among the first of these collections was the translation of Dutch and French and transcription of English documents which were found in foreign archives in the 1840's. The result of this effort was a fifteen volume series of *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York.* A few years later a four volume set entitled *Documentary*

History of the State of New York was compiled from archival materials found in the United States. Both of these sets have a great deal of material on the history of the Upper Hudson including colonial census records, correspondence, travel accounts and official colonial documents.

Besides some poor translations done in the mid-nineteenth century of Dutch colonial documents related to this region, there have been published about fifteen volumes of good translations in this century which are a mother-lode of information on the government, and court which the Dutch used frequently to resolve an endless number of controversies, and land dealings.

During the last century an Albany printer, Joel Munsell, compiled two major series of miscellaneous documents, newspaper notices, genealogies and official records on the history of Albany totaling fourteen volumes. These two compilations have proven to be mines of historical data used by researchers, probably more than any other history of Albany. The *Annals of Albany* includes, for instance, the first seventy-five years of the Albany City Council minutes and the *Collections on the History of Albany* has brief genealogies on the earliest settlers of Albany County.

Copies of this type of material are ideal for classroom use, because they are so much more accessible to find and read, especially when the originals have either been lost or cannot be photocopied because of their fragility.

Educational Skills and Understandings

Each of the various types of published sources discussed above can serve one or more purposes in the classroom, and they can be used as both primary and secondary sources of information on the Upper Hudson.

Sections of the local histories of counties might be used for achieving an overall view of a village's history; genealogical sources can be studied for changing family relationships; travel accounts will provide critical observations of a community and teach the importance of objectivity in discussing both historical and current situations in their hometowns; political pamphlets and sermons may be used to consider changing moral and political issues and government documents will not only furnish topical information but also give students a brief glimpse of the incredible number of issues with which government is concerned.

Reading any published work, particularly history, requires critical thought to evaluate and balance evidence and opinion. Local histories, genealogies and "mug books" are quite susceptible to overweening pride and exaggerated statement. Students will learn

to recognize such historical errors and opinion by reading these works critically. Using political pamphlets on both sides of an issue will also help students to balance arguments and sift evidence.

Access

Published resources can be found in greater or lesser numbers in all libraries, historial societies and local museums. The largest collection nearby is at the State Library, where can be found most of the printed local historical and genealogical material about the Upper Hudson, large collections of pamphlets and city directories and complete sets of federal and state documents. Most of the books are not available for inter-library loan, although many of the local histories are on microfilm and may be borrowed, and most of the material can be photocopied.

Most public libraries in the area have excellent collections of local history books usually kept in special restricted use rooms and again are rarely available for loan. The same is true of historical societies, such as the Albany Institute of History and Art, Rensselaer County Historical Society and Columbia County Historical Society.

The school library should also consider acquiring some of the reprinted standard local history books for the region, some of which are fairly inexpensive. Local booksellers and flea markets are also good places to check for copies of the original edition of these histories.

Researchers using these sources should realize that much of this material is quite rare and fragile and great care is needed in handling it. In addition, photocopying may be taboo for some material, although photographing and photostating is usually possible as these methods do not damage books as easily.

Summary

Published resources are available in overwhelming numbers and varieties and provide an endless fount of information for local history study in the classroom. It is, however, each teacher's task to decide what sources to use for each curriculum unit and which ones will be the most effective. The long history of the Upper Hudson region, which is so well-documented in these sources, will make this task both interesting and productive.

Activities

(1) Have students review a nineteenth century genealogical and biographical record, then create one in the same style for: their

family, their school, or their neighborhood. Important points to discuss include who is to be listed, how accurate the information is, and what would have to be done to make the listings acceptable to people.

(2) Using business directories to provide basic information, students can compile scrapbooks of illustrations or make drawings showing the types of business and the items they would have made or sold.

(3) After reading a travel account, have students imagine they are that traveller returning to the community in the twentieth century. They can then write a description of the community as they would perceive it now.

(4) Local histories can be used to help students in learning to evaluate objectivity. Students can compile lists of value-laden words and phrases in an early local history and in more contemporary versions. The lists can also be compared with similar lists compiled from textbooks or other sources students might suggest as being objective. This activity can lead to discussions of how much opinion must be discernible to harm a source's objectivity, or whether objectivity can, or should, be stressed.

Suggested Readings

This list of suggested reading is selective and simply provides a sample of the type of materials available in state and regional repositories. Examples have been chosen to represent various localities in the Upper Hudson region chiefly to show that each resource format can be found in most localities of the region. A few basic works are listed at the beginning to provide general background material.

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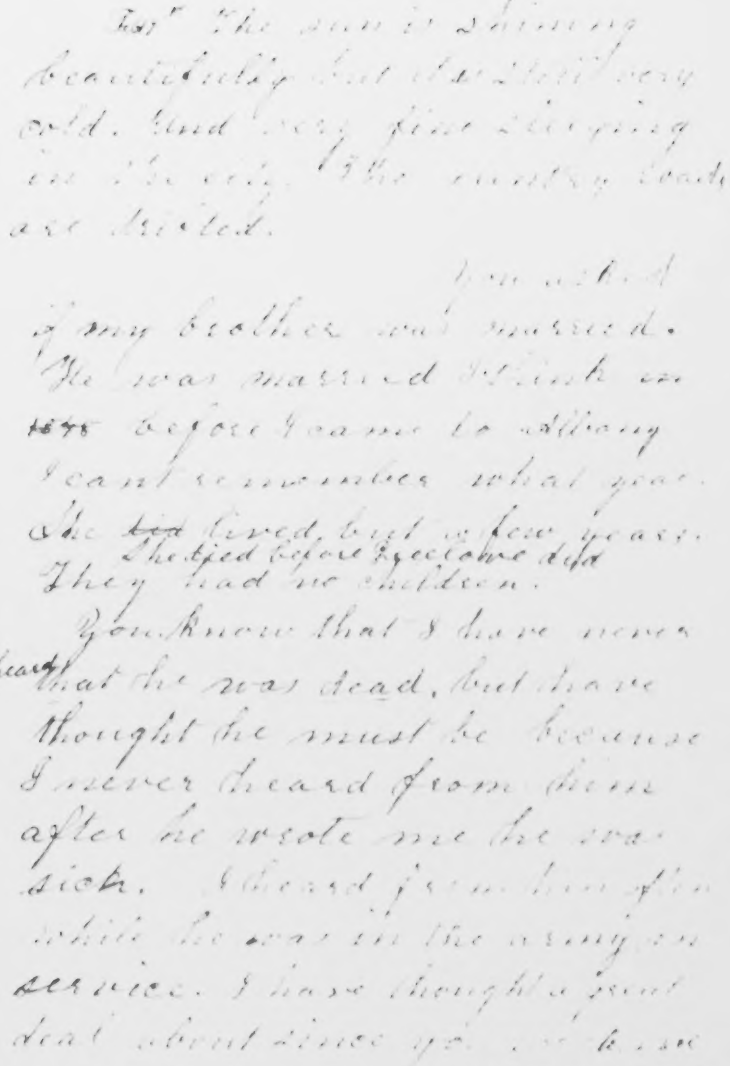

A letter to a "dear friend" written from Albany in the Winter of 1885. The writer discusses the weather, family and friends, and mentions that she does not know when her brother was married, and if he is alive or dead. Students might find curious the difficulty of "keeping in touch" with even close relatives during the 19th century. Letters and similar papers can be found in most families, and provide a unique glimpse into the lives of everyday people.

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II. Personal Papers

Introduction

Humanizing history is a stimulating way to involve students in the study of the past. Historic events and trends may seem remote and unrelated to anything within a young person's experience. A human connection often awakens their interest and attention--for example, students have always loved stories about George Washington's wooden false teeth. That story, however apocryphal, deals with a human condition they recognize. Not that students cannot understand complex ideas or social trends, but they are more receptive when historical themes can begin from a realistic, human level.

Personal papers, those records produced by individuals in the course of daily life, can provide students with that important initial touchstone to the past. Individuals leave a paper trace behind them documenting many aspects of ordinary, and not-so-ordinary life. Several areas commonly documented can provide useful information in the classroom. Vital statistics records supply basic data on individuals. Property-related records show possessions and land ownership. Household and family maintenance records fill in details of everyday life. Personal writing adds emotions, thoughts, and individual insights to these historical characters, as do records resulting from entertainment. Finally, school records provide students with historical documents that are particularly familiar to them.

The range of human experience is well reflected by the people of the Upper Hudson region. First, it is a multi-ethnic area, including such groups as the French-Canadians, the Dutch, the Irish, the Poles, the Italians, and the English. This wide variety of ethnic groups provides differing perspectives of social, political, and economic developments.

People in the Upper Hudson are also from a cross-section of economic classes. A number of wealthy, influential families lived in this area: the Van Rensselaers, the Lansings, the Van Burens, and the Cornings. The records they left show "life from the top," where formative economic and political decisions are made. Lesser known individuals, such as farmers, doctors, teachers, lawyers, and merchants, reflect the activites of the burgeoning middle-class in the Upper Hudson region. The group only addressed tangentially in

personal papers are the non-literate people, the laboring classes, the poor, and the incarcerated. Information about these individuals may be found in sources to be discussed in other chapters in this series.

The people of the Upper Hudson have left a large body of personal papers which may be used to view industrialism, and agriculture, social life, and politics as they develop both in the region and in the nation.

Kinds of Personal Papers

Vital Statistics Records. A variety of records have been produced in the past which provide basic information about individuals and families. They can be used to provide an outline of the facts about people, which can be expanded through the use of other personal papers.

Birth records were not officially kept by the State of New York until 1880. As a result, records for earlier periods may take many forms. Some localities did record births, as did some churches for baptismal purposes. These records may give information both on the individual born, and also on the parents.

Death records provide similar kinds of vital statistics information. Death certificates which indicate the cause of death, can also provide some interesting insight into the status of medicine and the health standards of a community. Marriage records are another basic resource for data on individuals and parents.

Military service records often contain biographical details on individuals. Records for the Revolutionary War are rather limited in this way, but Civil War, World War I, and World War II records are loaded with information.

Family Bibles often record many vital statistics on family members, and so can be a good source for a "group portrait."

Property-Related Records. The material possessions of people can be identified through various kinds of property records. Wills often include detailed estate inventories listing all the items owned by an individual, down to spoons and spats. Chattel mortgages give similar listings of property owned. Armed with a floor plan of the house, students can try to "re-decorate" by identifying where various items belong. This kind of information is also useful for comparing the living standards of social classes and eras.

A variety of land records exists in the Upper Hudson region and can be traced back as far as the era of the early patroons of Rensselaerswyck. The leases, surveys and rent ledgers from the manor have survived and describe each tenant's farm and rent payment. Various land patents and land deeds describing the land

and sometimes giving details about owners and families can be located. Patents and deeds also describe the land in some detail enabling the location of early tenant holdings on early maps.

Household and Family Maintenance Records. A wide variety of bills, receipts, and family ephemera can be used to provide details on the nature of everyday life. Bills and receipts for goods purchased tell not only what people bought, but also the amounts (leading to questions of transportation and storage), and the cost of running a household. Some of the items, such as lard, soapstones, chromos, and bustles may be unfamiliar to students and can be used as "mini-mysteries" for them to solve.

Health practices can be looked at through doctors' bills and medicinal receipts. They provide some idea of common diseases and how they were treated, as well as home remedies and "sure cure" treatments, such as cod liver oil.

With current interest and emphasis on fashion, bills from seamstresses and tailors will provide great contrast. The time and expense of having clothing made in individual pieces and the practice of remaking clothes is evident. The detachable collar, which was invented in Troy and became one of its major industries, can be seen by students as an example of many Victorian-age inventions that enabled the overworked housekeeper to shorten her day and to work within a limited budget. Detachable collars and cuffs were inexpensive, easily cleaned, and disposable.

Cookbooks, especially those composed of handwritten recipe collections, give much insight into the American habits of eating. They reflect what people ate, the kind of preparation it took, and the demands on the time and energy of the person preparing it (especially before the electric mixer!) Many cookbooks also contain home remedy recipes for both humans and animals, household tips for furniture polish, stain remover, and wart remover. The cookbooks printed and distributed by area Shakers also have many household tips and personal remedies. Cookbooks are fun to read, and are an easy way to add "flavor" to history.

Personal Writing. One of the best ways to get people's own versions of daily life is through personal correspondence. Letters are the clue to standards of literacy, leisure time, and personal wealth. Whatever the level of detail, most letters focus on daily concerns and notable personal occasions, giving students a direct point of contact. The kinds of events recorded by men and women may be compared, as might those of the well-to-do with the middle and working classes.

Diaries are another rich source of personal writing. One caution, however, is that some people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw diaries as the revelation of their soul to God, hence were not quite as frank as diarists are reputed to be. The kind of information recorded in a diary may vary, from the relating of daily

events to a farmer's description of crops planted or a Civil War soldier's thoughts of home and views of the battlefield.

Essays were often written by both students and adults on a wide variety of topics from temperance to women's suffrage, and are often found in family papers. They provide a glimpse into the moral and political opinions of the essayist and the social climate of his or her times.

Entertainment. Many kinds of ephemera are commonly kept by people which give insight into leisure time activities in the pre-television age. Valentine cards, Christmas cards, and birthday cards show how holidays were celebrated, and they give insight into the festive tone of those holidays. This is an obvious source for drawing comparisons about the different and changing ways in which events were celebrated. Invitations to social events are a particularly rich source on activities in the past. They reflect the kinds of things people did, (e.g. dancing, games, skits, plays) and the variety of social and religious groups who sponsored activities (church socials, political party picnics, temperance union rallys).

Personal School Records. Students are always fascinated by school records, since they relate so closely to their own experience. Report cards show not only what was studied but also can reveal the kind of life for which the child was being prepared. This varies both between public and private schools, as well as in different historical periods. A young woman taking courses in "Universal History" and "speaking French" was hardly destined for a Cohoes Textile Mill!

Textbooks and copybooks illustrate the kind of lessons students were learning, and how they were accomplished. These are excellent sources to use in re-living a day in an historic classroom.

Yearbooks provide information, in addition to chuckles over past clothing styles and hair-dos. They illustrate the kinds of clubs and activities available to students and are replete with photographs of the school building, and faculty.

Educational Understandings and Skills

Personal papers can be useful in developing a number of content understandings. Students can learn to recognize the role of the individual in the past and the concerns, attitudes, and activities characteristic of different people. The role of the individual in groups also becomes apparent, as they interact with family, clubs, organizations, and the general community.

Students can also begin to recognize the range and character of lifestyles in the past. The differences in life for the textile worker in a Cohoes mill, a merchant in Hudson, and a person taking "the cure"

at a Saratoga spa become real experiences rather than hazy historical facts. This method of beginning with daily life is more comprehensible to students and gives them the connection to their own experience. Once they have used this to understand an historic life they can be led into understandings of wider national historical trends.

A number of useful skills can be developed while working with personal papers. Students develop empathy, by learning to see life through the experiences of others. They also learn to gather information from a variety of sources (some of which do not state the information explicitly) and to put that information together. This encourages them to develop skills in drawing conclusions based on evidence and formulating hypotheses about life in the past. Finally, they can begin to recognize attitudes and opinions as they arise in personal narrations of events.

Access

Personal papers can be found in many repositories having manuscript collections. The size of a personal papers collection may vary from hundreds of boxes to a few items. They are, however, one of the most prolific sources, and time to locate the materials should be the only problem.

The New York State Library's Manuscripts and Special Collections has many collections of personal papers. Their general emphasis is on the Upstate New York region, so there are many useful collections for studying the Upper Hudson. In particular, they have many records for various Van Rensselaer families and numerous other prominent local families.

A number of other repositories should be routinely checked for personal papers. Local and regional historical societies are an excellent source, especially for papers directly related to your community. Public libraries also often have manuscript collections, however formally or informally housed. Also, librarians are an invaluable reference source on who *does* have records of this kind in the community. Local universities might be checked as well, since some have archives and special collections which include local materials. Local historians should not be overlooked as a source for personal papers, as they may either collect this kind of record themselves, or will know who in the community does.

Another way to locate personal papers which will be of interest to students is to organize attic searches. Copies of these may then be made before returning them to the family; sometimes the family is even interested in giving them to the teachers, at which point they should be put in the library or a local repository for appropriate care and safekeeping.

Another occasional source for personal papers are flea markets and used book stores, where truly interesting and useful materials can often be had at a cheap price. This also has the advantage of giving students a chance to see the record in the original.

Accessing personal papers, as mentioned before, can require some time. Often one may have to look through many boxes of materials to find useful records, since they are arranged for use by historical researchers, not teachers. The major stumbling blocks are handwriting that is sometimes difficult and fragile materials that cannot be photocopied. However, so many records of this kind have survived that with a little perseverance, some very valuable teaching materials can be located.

Summary

The range and amount of personal papers available for use as classroom teaching tools make this a valuable resource. Through the use of letters, cookbooks, birth certificates and so forth, an accurate and personal view of the population of the Upper Hudson region can be achieved. The Upper Hudson region contains such an exemplary cross-section of the populations common to the United States that it is easily possible to relate national trends and developments to local ones. The records produced by individuals in this region clearly give a representative view of the American experience.

Activities

(1) Chattel mortgages and wills can be used for dictionary lessons by having students locate unfamiliar words and identifying the definition which is appropriate to the context. They might also make illustrated dictionaries of "old" words by looking up further information on types of furniture, kitchen utensils, or pieces of clothing.

(2) In conjunction with a study of nutrition, students might analyze an old cookbook to determine how much food from the four basic food groups were eaten in the past. They might then conjecture as to why some food groups were heavily relied on, while other types of food were rare.

(3) After reading and discussing a personal letter, have students pretend they are the recipient and write an appropriate answer.

(4) Have students bring in a personal letter recently received in their home and compare the kinds of information talked about to the information in a letter from the past.

(5) Using the information found in death records, have students write newspaper obituaries for the deceased. Birth and marriage records can be used to write similar newspaper announcements.

Suggested Research Sources

There is a dearth of published detailed guides to local manuscript collections. Reference books such as the *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections* can be helpful for some historical research, but such sources often miss the smaller local collections. The NHPRC funded Historical Records Survey, which has surveyed institutions in central and western New York, is presently surveying the Upper Hudson Region's manuscript resources. When this work is completed and published, county by county, teachers using historical records will have excellent new sources of information.

Meanwhile teachers seeking personal papers should check their local libraries and historical societies, as well as the institutions listed below which have substantial collections.

Manuscripts and Special Collections, New York State Library, Cultural Education Center, Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12230

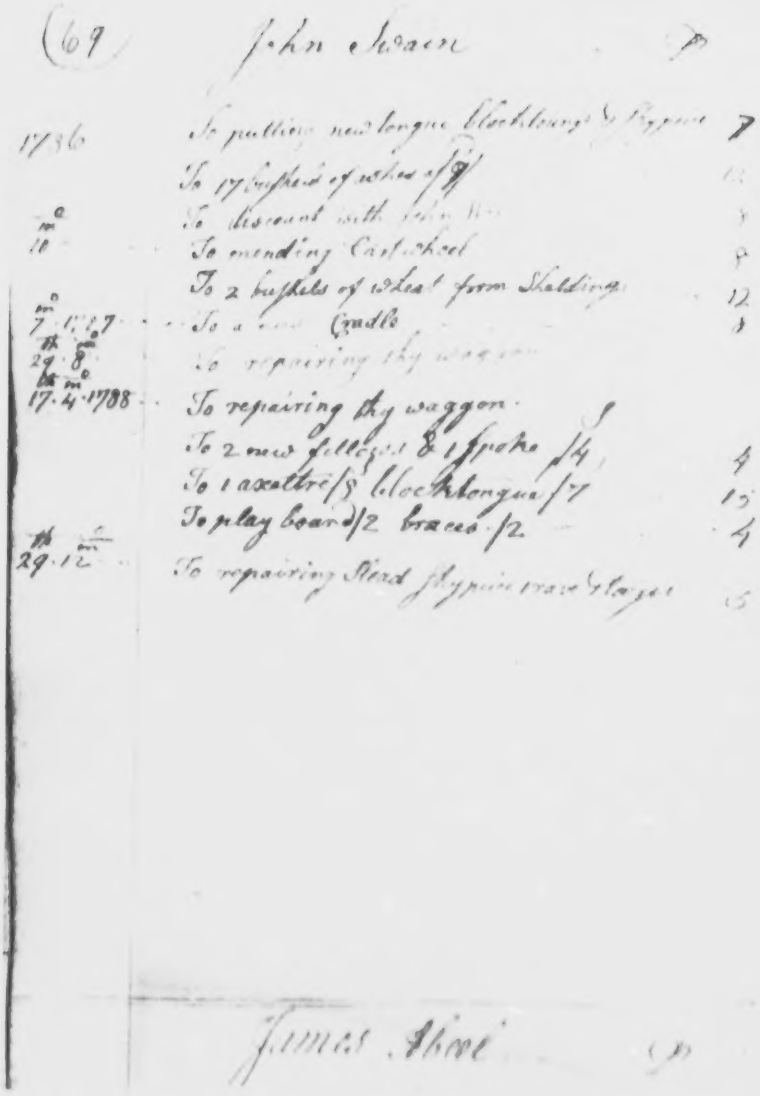
Albany Institute of History and Art, 125 Washington Ave., Albany, New York 12210

Columbia County Historical Society, Broad St., Kinderhook, New York 12106

Greene County Historical Society, Bronck House, Coxsackie, New York 12051

Rensselaer County Historical Society, 59 Second St., Troy, New York 12180

Saratoga County Historical Society, Brookside Museum, Ballston Spa, New York 12020



(69) John Swaen

1786 To putting new tongue block tongue & typpin 7

To 17 setting of nuts @ 1/ 17

To discount with [illegible] 3

10 To mending Cart wheel 8

To 2 bushels of wheat from Shalding 12

7 mo 17 To a new Cradle 3

29 mo 8 To repairing thy waggon

17 mo 4 To repairing thy waggon 8

To 2 new fellows & 1 spoke 4/ 4

To 1 axeltree & block tongue 7/ 15

To play board 2 braces 2 4

29 mo 12 To repairing Steel skyppin traw & tongue 5

James Shoel (D

Ledger books provide detailed accounts of the purchase of goods and services and their costs in a community. This account from Hudson, N.Y. indicates not only the costs of repairing a wagon, but also the price of a new cradle.

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III. Business Records

Introduction

Business has always been "big" in the Upper Hudson region--its settlement began as a business venture by the Dutch, and it has continued to be an active economic area throughout history. As a result, the Upper Hudson is a rich source for business records. These records, covering the policies and operations of privately-owned, profit-making organizations, range from "mom and pop" grocery stores to corporations the size of Schenectady's General Electric Corporation. These businesses are documented through executive records, financial records, employee records, and various printed advertisements and catalogs which reflect the nature and quality of business life.

The role of business in the Upper Hudson is not only historic; it is also representative of the many forms of American industrialism and mercantilism. Many early industries had important roots in this area, including textile work in Cohoes, whaling in Hudson, and iron work in Troy. Numerous innovations in industry began, or were developed to a great extent, in this region. The detachable collar was invented in Troy; the Shakers in Watervliet developed seeds and various handicraft products of national renown; General Electric, one of the largest area employers, has produced a variety of products from light bulbs to turbines.

The sources of power for industry in the Upper Hudson before the age of electricity were climate and season controlled. There were massive lay-offs during droughts or floods which damaged water wheels and turbines. Before the railroad, supplies of raw materials and sources of fuel were affected by climate, and when they ran short, workers would be laid off, impacting on economic conditions for all.

The Upper Hudson region was also an important source for dissemination of business and trade, serving as an important transfer point. Many people, armed with well-developed business skills as well as products were sent on to western New York State, the Midwest, and down to New York City by railroads, canals, and turnpikes via the Upper Hudson.

Kinds of Business Records

Executive Records. A useful source of information on medium and large size organizations are the executive records, such as minutes of meetings, annual reports, or correspondence. These records will show how an organization was run, how decisions were or were not made, and what items were of concern to the management. In an age of big business and economic complexity, it is helpful to use this type of record to show students how some businesses have grown and developed into the present monolithic structures, while others have stayed at a small or moderate level. The attitudes of management towards its employees may also be expressed in these kinds of records, providing a useful comparison with records showing the attitude of the same employees toward management. In records relating to strikes and unionism, it is particularly useful to include records from the executive level in order to ensure an objective historical picture.

Employee Records. There are a variety of employee records, especially again in medium to larger organizations, which are also interesting. Payroll records tell who were workers, how many employees there were, and what kind of salary they were paid. This information provides useful data for comparisons of pay for different types of work, as well as the ability of a worker to live on the wages paid, based on contemporary prices.

Another interesting record sometimes compiled by early businesses are disciplinary records, telling why employees were fired, or how they were reprimanded. A book of this type from the Burden Iron Company of Troy, for example, lists such causes of firing as drunkenness, suspicion of union activities, insolence, and destructive behavior. It reveals much about work situations in the past, as well as relationships of workers and employers.

Many businesses also had printed rules and regulations for employees to follow which again provide information on working conditions. Students may be surprised to learn of dress codes, prohibitions on conversation, and the necessity for permission to use rest rooms.

Financial Records. Both larger organizations and small businesses often leave financial records providing good resources for study. Account books, ledgers, and cashbooks show what business was taking place, and when heavy seasons for trade occurred. They also reveal who the customers were, what kind of things were purchased, and how payments and credits were made. Account books from general stores also provide a concise record of the cost of living. Compared with salary records, they give an excellent key to financial conditions at a given time.

A particularly enjoyable financial record to use with students are bills and receipts. Many receipts before the days of cash registers have much more than just the cost of items. They often serve an advertising function as well, with pictures of the store, or the goods sold by the business. Others give information on the products and services dealt in by the business, thereby providing a mini-history of the company. It is often possible to have students try to identify some of the items or names given on these headings, as well as locating the buildings on a map of the city, and identifying shopping districts and areas where certain types of businesses congregate.

Catalogs and Advertisements. As modern Americans, students are already experienced shoppers and can exercise their skill with historic window shopping through catalogs. They will be struck, first, of course, by the curious nature of many products, and may have great fun trying to figure out what some things were used for or how they worked. Their attention can also be drawn to the range and quantity of products available in different historical periods. As with receipts, catalogs are a good source for determining the cost of living at any given time. The whole idea of catalog shopping, how it worked, and why it developed provides additional insight into life in the past, making the pioneering life a little less attractive than television would make it seem.

Advertisements are another resource to which students are particularly attuned. The techniques used to advertise certain products tell much about common stereotypes--such as the proliferation of mildly alcoholic potions sold to relieve the "female compliants" and other hazy diseases of the "weaker sex" in the Victorian era.

Educational Skills and Understandings

Records of this kind can be used to help students understand the role of business in shaping the development of an area. They may learn to recognize both the effect of the economy and environment on business, as well as the effect of business on the economy and environment. The interrelationship of management and labor in the business community is another useful subject for students to consider; most will eventually become part of such a relationship, so the more they understand about the nature and possibilities of the roles for each, the better prepared they will be for their own working life. Since a major part of any historical figure's life was spent in work, business records are an important key to the conditions and nature of life in general.

Finally, the varieties of businesses in the Upper Hudson region are a sample of the ranges and variety of business enterprise as it developed in the United States as a whole.

Working with business records can help students in the development of various skills. They learn to gather information from a variety of sources and compile it into a larger picture of what a business was like. It is also a particularly good resource for developing research skills, since many products and terminology may be unfamiliar, and will require students to find out what they are; this often can require some creative use of research sources as well to locate the needed information. These records are also a good resource for helping students to recognize viewpoints and evaluate situations as objectively as possible, as is necessary, for example, when viewing a labor dispute from the viewpoint of both management and employees.

Access

Business records are one of the most readily available types of historical records. In addition, many people (or packrats as they are known in the vernacular) are very careful to preserve bills, receipts, and records of this nature.

The New York State Library is a good resource for records of large businesses in the Upper Hudson region. The Library contains the records of the Delaware and Hudson Railway, the Burden Iron Works, and the Meneely Bell Company of West Troy. It also has a large collection of account books from stores and smaller establishments from the 18th century to the recent past.

Local historical societies, museums, and local historians are also very likely to have business records. In particular they often have bills and receipts, advertisements and catalogs, account books and records generated by smaller local businesses.

Some larger businesses have their own corporate archives and libraries where earlier records, catalogs, and advertisements are kept. These are not always libraries with automatic public access, so it is advisable to call in advance explaining one's research needs.

A final resource is the local business people themselves, who may have old catalogs, advertisements, and various records tucked away in their offices. These do not necessarily have to be "ancient" records, as you might want to tell them. To many students, the 1950's will seem remote enough both in time and price!

Summary

The range and diversity of business records in the Upper Hudson region provide a good cross-section representative of major trends in American economic history. They reflect the relationships of businesses, communities, and individuals in the most predominant activity in life--work!

Activities

(1) Give students bills and receipts with products and services listed. Then have them prepare an advertising campaign for one store or company.
(2) Using bills and receipts or city directories, identify the location of stores and factories on a contemporary map. After deciding where the main business districts were, identify the same areas in the present. Try to explain why they have developed where they did and why they may have changed.
(3) Have each student choose an industry from the local area, researching the production methods used in that industry. Have them imagine they are the owner of the industry, and make a list of the rules and regulations they would have their employees follow. (Use rules and regulations from several industries as examples). Then have them trade rules and regulations, and write their reactions to these as if they were an employee reading them for the first time.
(4) Using bills, receipts, and account books, identify the quantities and items which people purchased. Then have students try to determine the kinds of containers these items would have been kept in. Also discuss the difficulties and differences in shopping when items to be purchased were in barrels, sack, and bolts.

Suggested Readings

Benedict, Karen M., comp. and ed. **A Select Bibliography on Business Archives and Records Management.** Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1981.

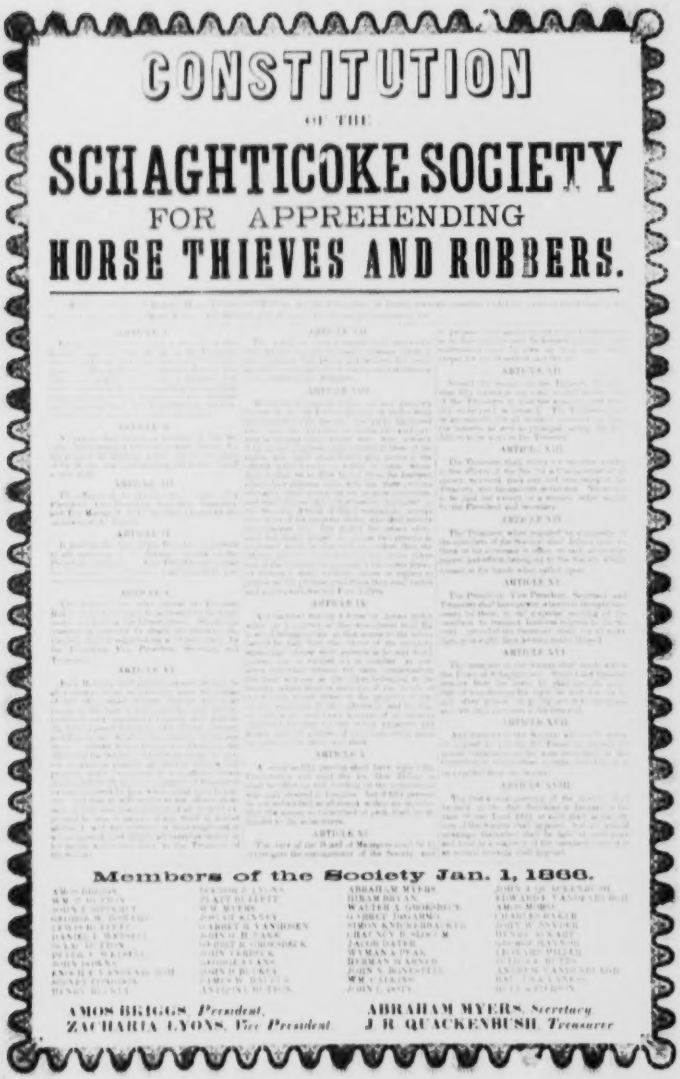
Larson, Henrietta M. **Guide to Business History: Materials for the Study of American Business History and Suggestions for their Use.** Boston: J.J. Conners and Co., 1964.

Neu, Irene D. **Erastus Corning, Merchant and Financier, 1794-1872** Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960.

Romaine, Lawrence B. **A Guide to American Trade Catalogs, 1744-1900.** New York: R.R. Bowker, 1960.

Society of American Archivists. **Directory of Business Archives in the United States and Canada.** Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1980.

Vogel, Robert M., ed. **A Report of the Mohawk-Hudson Area Survey.** Smithsonian Studies in History and Technology #26. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1973.



CONSTITUTION

OF THE

SCHAGHTICOKE SOCIETY

FOR APPREHENDING

HORSE THIEVES AND ROBBERS.

Members of the Society Jan. 1, 1866.

AMOS BRIGGS, *President.*
ZACHARIA LYONS, *Vice President.*

ABRAHAM MYERS, *Secretary.*
J. R. QUACKENBUSH, *Treasurer.*

Organizations were created for a wide variety of purposes, including the apprehension of horse thieves in Schagticoke, New York. Their records provide insights into both a community's concerns and problems and its solutions.

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IV. Organizational Records

Introduction

The people of the Upper Hudson have long been a vocal, active, congregating group. Labor unions of iron workers and collar launderers in Troy were nationally important in the nineteenth century. Schenectady has been a center for labor activism throughout the twentieth century and at one time was a try-works for socialism in municipal government. The location of the State Captiol in Albany has helped to encourage an emphasis on politics and political organizations. Organizations which tried to reform society for welfare of humanity in such areas as temperance, women's suffrage, and abolition of slavery have figured prominently in the evolution of these groups nationally. With the cultural diversity that has characterized the Upper Hudson since the colonization by the Dutch, ethnically and religiously oriented groups have often formed social clubs such as the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Knights of Columbus. Perhaps the most notable organization to originate and grow in the Upper Hudson was the utopian communitarian society of Shakers, who left behind a great storehouse of historical resources for their study.

Kinds of Organizational Records

Labor Union Records. The Upper Hudson developed labor unions for both its men's and women's industries. Records are available which reflect the issues of importance to unions, and their efforts to achieve their goals. Minutes of union meetings clearly indicate issues and strategies. Handbills, posters, circulars, and newspapers were a popular method for disseminating information on the purposes and views of the union. These are a particularly good source for use with students because they are often concise, simply-worded, and use attention-getting techniques which draw student interest, just as it was meant to do with workers. Labor union records are excellent to parallel with records from related businesses to get "both sides" of the story.

Political Organization Records. New Yorkers have traditionally been politically involved, and the Upper Hudson region is no exception. Many wielders of political power, from Martin Van Buren to the Corning Family, have lived in this area, and their records remain in local repositories. A variety of materials produced by political parties reflect their interest and activities. Campaign posters, handbills, and broadsides reveal both political issues and techniques for appealing to constituents. More detailed political statements, especially party platforms, reveal not only the stands taken by a party at a given time, but can be compared over years to reflect political development and change. Personal correspondence of party leaders and political campaigners is very useful because of the often confidential party secrets and plans which they may contain, giving students an understanding of the behind-the-scenes machinations of politicians.

Reform Organization Records. Reform organizations often have left minutes of their sometimes hectic meetings, correspondence and printed reports, broadsides and circulars. Students reading about efforts to achieve women's suffrage in the 1830's will begin to appreciate more fully the modern feminist movement, while temperance issues may be related to students' current concerns with drugs and alcohol.

Utopian Societies. The Upper Hudson group which has left the largest amount of printed and archival material besides its buildings and material culture is of course, the Shakers.

A communitarian society which originated and remained in the Upper Hudson region while also spreading east and west, the Shakers left an incredibly detailed record of their beliefs, daily activities, manufacturing, and their dealings with the "world." These records can be mined for different local history units or an entire unit may be done on the Shakers, complemented by field trips to local Shaker museums.

Educational Understandings and Skills

Organizational records are useful for helping students to understand the variety of interest and issues that cause people to form groups. Many organizations today are well-established, and students often are unaware of the pressures or needs that caused such groups to be formed in the first place. With contemporary tendencies to fit one's beliefs to existing groups, it may be important for students to realize that groups originally were begun to fit the varying ideas of individuals.

These records can also be used to help students understand the techniques used by groups to take action or draw attention to

themselves. Since the same techniques are often present in society today, it is a directly applicable lesson.

Organizational records are particularly useful in developing student skills in recognizing opinions, since many of these groups had definite ideas on life. Inflammatory language, argumentation, subtle pressure, and various techniques for proving given points are rampant. Understanding and recognizing these, again is a skill directly usable in students' own lives.

Access

The records of organizations may be located in a number of places. The New York State Library has papers of political leaders, reform organizations, private libraries, and social clubs. They also have a large group of Shaker records.

Many historical societies and local libraries also have records of various groups, particularly social clubs, reform organizations, and local political parties.

Some archives and libraries have special subject collections, such as the Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University. As a result of the development of these subject collections, relevant records may be outside of the Upper Hudson region geographically. Local universities also often have archival collections which include organizational records.

In some cases, organizations have retained their records themselves. The records are often part of a library for the organization, and, as with business records, can usually be consulted when arrangements are made in advance.

Summary

Students today join ski and sports clubs, work with political and environmental reform groups, and form ad-hoc protest and interest groups. A study of the history of such groups in the past will teach lessons about the needs, purposes and actions of such groups. It will also provide insight on the need for such voluntary organizations in a democratic, free society.

Activities

(1) Have students collect handbills, posters, circulars or newspapers distributed by unions today. Then compare these to similar records published by a nineteenth or early twentieth century union. Points of comparison might include the issues raised by the union, the language techniques used to persuade workers to agree with the union, and the reactions that workers might have to the issues raised.

(2) Provide students with a handbill or strike circular. Then give them brief biographies of "typical" workers in the industry (e.g. a young single man, a working woman with three small children and no husband, a man who has worked with the company for twenty years.) Have the students determine what the attitudes of these workers might be toward a strike. Some students might take the role of strike organizers, and others that of industrial management, then make speeches to influence the workers. Following this, a strike vote may be held.
(3) Choose regional political figures such as Martin Van Buren or Chester A. Arthur and have students research their political views through campaign posters and other political records. Then mount a modern day political campaign with slogans, posters and handbills reflecting their political views. A school-wide election might be held in conjunction with this.
(4) Students can compile a history of some local charitable, social, or reform organization. They may interview current members, use newspapers, and other organizational records. Particular emphasis should be placed on the goals of the organization, whether they have been met, and why people would join this organization.
(5) Younger students can do brief oral history interviews with adults about the kinds of clubs and organizations they joined when children. Some students might interview a teen-ager, others a parent, and others a grandparent to provide comparisons.

Suggested Readings

Christman, Henry. **Tin Horns and Calico.** Cornwallville, N.Y.: Hope Farm Press, 1978.

Felt, Jeremy P. **Hostages of Fortune: Child Labor Reform in New York State.** Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1965.

Richmond, Mary L., comp. **Shaker Literature: A Bibliography.** 2 vols. Hancock, Mass.: Shaker Community Inc., 1977.

Walkowitz, Daniel J. **Worker City, Company Town, Iron and Cotton-Worker Protest in Troy and Cohoes, New York, 1855-84.** Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978.

BOARD OF HEALTH!

WHEREAS the Governor of the State of New York has, by *Proclamation*, revived the Law passed June 22, 1832, for the Preservation of the Public Health,—

Notice is hereby given:

That a Board of Health has been organized, agreeable to the provisions of said Act, in this Village; and is now engaged in the duties with which it is charged; and, to prevent unnecessary alarm, and to enable the Board and the citizens to judge more accurately of the state of the public health, it is ordered that all keepers of Hotels, Taverns and Boarding Houses give notice of all cases of Cholera at their respective houses, not attended by a physician, at the office of Dr. Burrus, within twenty-four hours after such attack, under a penalty of twenty-five dollars; and all physicians in the village are required to report all cases of Cholera under their care, at the same place, within the same time, and subject to the same penalty for neglect.

The public may rest assured that no case of Cholera exists in the village at present; and that all proper exertions are being made by the Board and its Agents, to cleanse the Village from all infectious materials, and make every preparation in their power to prevent or mitigate the effects of that most fearful pestilence; and the Trustees of the Village are requested to enforce the Ordinances they have passed for paving and grading alleys and filling up lots, and to see that the Superintendent and Road Masters are diligent and faithful in the discharge of their several duties; and all the citizens are earnestly requested to assist the Board in their exertions.

AND THE CITIZENS WILL TAKE NOTICE

1.—That all Nuisances, of whatever nature, must be abated immediately.

2.—Whenever personal notice of the existence of any nuisance is served on the owner or occupant of any Lot, the requirements of said Notice must be complied with, within the time thereon specified, or the penalty of the Law will be enforced, as follows:—

"*Every person who shall wilfully violate any Regulations to to be made and published by any Board of Health, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof, shall be subject to fine and imprisonment, or both, at the discretion of the Court; such fine not to exceed one thousand dollars, nor such imprisonment two years.*"

3.—It is required, that, after being properly cleansed, quick lime shall be liberally strewed in and about all wet or damp places, such as vaults, cess-pools, cellars, stables, hog-pens, alleys, gutters, &c. And that all may be provided with Lime, measures have been taken by this Board to procure an ample supply; and it can be procured at cost price at the following places, viz: at R. Dunlop's Lime House in the 1st ward, and at John Perkins's Lime House in the 3d ward.

Persons unable to pay for the Lime, will be supplied without cost, on application to either of the members of this Board.

S. S. WANDELL,
P. FITZGERALD,
JOHN SILLIMAN,
SAML. CRAWFORD,
JOHN HASTINGS,
DAN'L. CARTHY,
JAMES REILEY.

WEST TROY, June 9, 1849.

W. HOLLANDS, PRINTER, (near the Upper Ferry,) WEST TROY.

The protection of public health as a function of local government may be seen in this broadside requiring obedience to Board of Health regulations for the prevention of cholera. The records of government can be used for discussions of both community history and the contemporary role of government.

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V. Local Government Records

Introduction

An often overlooked, but extremely valuable, resource for the study of local history are the records produced by local governing bodies and officials in the process of carrying out their functions. Although the number of people in various municipalities may vary greatly as do the systems of governance, there are certain local government records which exist in most local entities providing excellent resources for classroom use. These include minutes of local boards, local laws, records of local officials, court records, and school district records. These records are often sufficiently comprehensible for students to use without having to know the specifics of local government.

Because some communities of the Upper Hudson region were settled in the seventeenth century these records often extend back to the early Colonial period. The broad chronological framework for the study of the region has made possible the development of many unique forms of local government. County government is fairly clearly definable, following the geographical division of counties. Many people become confused, however, by the differences between cities, villages, and towns. The differences are not based on any clear pattern. Towns are the most numerous unit of local government and consist of a geographical subdivision within a county to provide for the exercise of local government powers and duties. Towns are not any specific size and are more similar to what are called townships in other states. Villages are defined as entities within towns which provide services to clusters of residents. At present, there is a certain area and population criterion, although some villages now have smaller than present minimum populations. Cities are the most nebulously defined unit of local government. Being a city does not necessarily connote a large size, since there is no statutory minimum in population or geographical area in designating a city. To become a city, a community submits a charter to the legislature for enactment; if the legislature approves it, that makes it a city. The act of legislation seems to be the main factor.

While all these divisions of government may seem unnecessarily complex, the creation of a rich lode of records by so many people and governing bodies enables a wide selection of resource materials for the teacher to choose from for classroom use.

Kinds of Local Government Records

Minutes of Local Boards. A common source for details on local history are the minutes of meetings kept by various local governing boards. These minutes usually list the local government officers by name and office, a helpful resource for compiling information about the civic functions of prominent citizens. Over a period of years, patterns may emerge showing dominance by certain families and ethnic or social groups. The issues of local importance discussed in the minutes will provide insight into the life of the community, its sources of consternation or amusement.

Laws. Laws passed at early municipal meetings can be minor puzzles for students to figure out--for example, why it was required that fences be four feet four inches high, or why pigs were required to have rings in their noses. Parallels may be drawn between earlier and more recent laws, and hypotheses may be made about differences in the kinds of laws passed, and why they have passed.

Records of Local Officials. Some local officials generated records related to the functions of their office. These records help us understand communities and their governments. Each community has different kinds and names of officers, which are usually indicated in the minutes of governing boards.

There are also records generated by a number of other officials in many communities. The fence viewer determined whether fences were of sufficient strength and size and determined whether property was properly protected from straying animals in the period before enclosed pens. He also kept records of unidentified stray animals and the destruction caused by them. Overseers of the poor determined who would receive "poor relief" in the days before welfare (an interesting comparison point for students). The records of local balloting in elections were maintained by election inspectors or boards of canvassers. Finally, the ever present tax assessors provide detailed information on property owners and their land holdings.

Court Records. Court records are also a valuable historical resource. Local courts were the site and scene of local intrigue and curious personal and community squabbles, especially in the Dutch period, when, lacking video games, people sued each other regularly as a source of amusement. The transcripts and filings relating to various court actions give insight into problems (or what were perceived as problems) in any given period.

Other legal transactions, such as the filing of wills or chattel mortgages are incidental sources of information about home life. These often include detailed inventories and property lists. They are an excellent resource for examining the possessions of an historic individual and for comparing his possessions with a student's own.

School District Records. Several kinds of school district records can be useful, and like personal school records, they have a high interest level for students. The minutes of meetings of school boards show the issues that were important in education and the varied opinions on how those issues were to be resolved. By comparing such minutes over a range of years, it is possible to see how some issues change and which ones are persistent. It provides an opportunity for students to learn how their school is run and how decisions are made which govern their school lives.

Financial records kept by schools show the cost of education, from supplies to teachers' salaries. The amount and kind of purchases made can tell something about the services provided by the school to the students--whether they had to purchase their own books or not, what kinds and quantities of physical education equipment were provided for them or health and medical services provided.

Attendance records can be used for several kinds of information. Records from one-room schools can lead to discussions of how classes were run with children of many ages and grade levels in the same room, and with brothers and sisters present together (which makes misbehavior harder to keep a secret from parents)! In rural areas, it is often possible to show students the importance of young people in farmwork, when older children were absent consistently during planting and harvesting seasons.

Records of a required curriculum show what was taught in the past, and can lead to some interesting insight into what were considered to be the essential elements of education in previous periods.

Educational Understandings and Skills

Because educational focus has commonly been on historical events of national importance, people are often unaware of the impact of local government on their family's and community's history. Using historical local government records with students will help them to become more clearly aware of the role of local government in community life. Similarly, it is possible for students to recognize the role of the individual in relationship to local government, whether as a direct participant in that government, or as a recipient of its actions.

Local government is the most basic unit in the larger state and national hierarchy, and studying its workings can help students understand the way society regulates and runs itself. Finally, studying local government's role in the past will invariably lead to a comparison and knowledge of local government in the present. By considering the various approaches and methods of handling problems, students may be better informed and prepared to be effective participants in their communities.

One of the most useful skills students can develop by studying local records is the ability to recognize and work with various forms of records. Many adults are disconcerted, if not baffled, by their first encounters with mortgages, court papers, or tax assessment rolls. Students who learn to recognize these basic tools of government will not experience such confusion--it is perhaps one of the most practical skills students can develop in social studies.

Access

Local government records may be located in a number of places, so it is useful to identify the location before embarking on a research trip. County and municipal clerks are the official record keepers; they will usually know what exists, and where and whether the records are accessible or available to copy.

Several localities in the Upper Hudson region have local government archives, specifically for the purpose of retaining historically valuable records. These include the City of Saratoga Springs, the town of Grafton, and the City and County of Albany. All of these archives have written guides to their collections, which greatly aid research.

Since municipal clerks have many responsibilities unrelated to preserving historical records, the records generally will not have card catalogs, indexes, or finding aids. This can make access to the records more time-consuming. However, since they generally were kept originally for office use, a certain level of order will already exist that is not so common in personal records. It is also useful to inquire in advance about the availability of copying facilities. If there are none, or if they are inadequate it may be necessary to use a 35mm camera or prepare transcripts. Finally, research space and time may be limited, so an appointment with the person in charge should be made. It is also helpful to tell the clerk the kinds of material you are looking for and why.

Local government records are not always retained by local government offices, so additional research locations should be checked. The New York State Archives retains some local records from miscellaneous localities, as the result of a law in the 1920's allowing localities who felt they couldn't house the records themselves to send them to the state for safe-keeping. In addition, a Bicentennial project conducted by the State Archives involved the microfilming of records from a variety of localities. These microfilms are available for interlibrary loan and for purchase.

Local government records can also occasionally be found in the holdings of historical societies, museums, and local libraries. For any of a number of reasons, public records may have strayed from public custody, and these organizations have preserved them.

Summary

Local government records are a very valuable resource for studying local history for a number of reasons. People and families may come and go in any given area. Local governments continue their activities and recordation on through time, so they are often the one resource that provides information for a long span of years. In addition, they are produced for the purpose of running and regulating society, so their informational content is usually good. Finally, the names of all levels of people appear in local government records, sooner or later. Some function, whether it is taxation, dog licensing, or public welfare, affects all the people in a community. As a result, local government records are one of the best resources for looking into the past of all the people in a community.

Activities

(1) Provide students with a copy of the minutes of the first meeting in their municipality. Discuss the reasons for the kind of business that took place at that meeting and also discuss what it tells about the plans and ideas the officers had for their community. As a further activity, students might make a set of laws they would think necessary to begin a town, city or village in the present.

(2) Using the list of local officers from the municipal minutes, have students select one official and do research on the responsibilities of that office during a certain historical period. Then have students write or present an annual report by that official.

(3) If municipal minutes are available for a century or more, students can undertake a statistical study of local officials by compiling information on the kinds of officials and the number of officials for a series of years (every 5, or 10). Then graph the information and try to account for the changes in officials.

Suggested Readings

Bailey, Marey L. and Sharon M. Sweeney. **Guide to the Historical Records in the Office of the Albany County Clerk.** Albany: Albany County Clerk, 1979.

Hasse, Adelaide R. **Index of Economic Materials in Documents of the States of the United States: New York 1789-1904.** Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1907.

Jones, H.G. **Local Government Records, An Introduction to their Management, Preservation and Use.** Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1980.

Kaufman, Susan. **Guide to the Archives, Town of Grafton, New York.** (Rensselaer County), Grafton: Town Clerk, 1980.

Page No.

Supervisor's Dist. No.

Enumeration Dist. No.

SCHEDULE 1.—Inhabitants in

in the County

enumerated by me on the

The Federal census of population for 1880 for Sand Lake, New York is filled with detailed information on people and families in the town. Students might note the large number of knitting mill workers and investigate further the local history of this industry.

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VI. Census Records

Introduction

"I'm just a number." "Do not crush, fold or spindle!" Who has not heard these complaints or not made them. In an increasingly technocratic society people tend to develop feelings of insignificance. These feelings can be especially strong in the young who already have the developmental problems of maturing in a world which they never made and which, when examined objectively, must seem chaotic and meaningless.

Every decade the government takes a census; it enumerates and quantifies its population according to set formulas. If anything were designed to reinforce the sense of being a "nobody," a "number," the census would seem to be it. However, the exact opposite may be the case, if the census is looked at from the viewpoint that instead of being just another statistic, each person listed is a part of a group being counted and therefore representative of it. Presto! A feeling of belonging replaces the sense of insignificance. This is particularly the case when using the historical population censuses compiled in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. These historical census records give names to the mass of unknown people of the past. Thus, the large Irish population of South Troy during the late nineteenth century is not a faceless mob of iron and steel workers--within the census records there is information about a man named Timothy O'Neill, his wife Bridget and children John and Betsy. These people are as representative of a period as are a Van Rensselaer or Schuyler. They may not have been as influential, but are nonetheless as significant because their existence helps us see the truth about all levels of society.

The census then, paradoxically does not treat historical persons as simply numbers and data, but also is one of the few sources which breathes humanity into history's unknowns--as such it is an important touchstone to our cumulative past.

The Upper Hudson region has been settled for over 350 years. This long range of time and the existence of colonial and state censuses for nearly the entire period provide an unusually broad statistical portrait. In addition, because the region has been populated at various times by Native-Americans and immigrants from nearly every nation in Europe, it provides a cross-section of ethnic groups for study. Students, though they usually identify themselves first as Americans, often have some notion of their

ethnic ancestry. By using the census in the classroom students can create a statistical profile of any type of particular ethnic group in a city and neighborhood. When the population census is used, individuals and families can be compared to others in the neighborhood in terms of ethnic variety and socio-economic class structure within that locale.

Kinds of Census Records

There are two basic types of census records, statistical and population. The former is a purely numerical cumulation of census data, e.g. how many people lived in Albany in 1840, how many blacks, how many cotton mill workers in Cohoes in 1880, etc.

The second type, the population census, is characterized by actual names of individual persons and families, e.g. Bernard Bessette of Cohoes in 1880, Peter Livingston in Albany in 1820, etc.

The two censuses are found in different forms--the statistical is usually printed and can be found in many libraries, whereas the population census is in manuscript (handwritten) form and is usually available in microfilm only in a few large research libraries. The microfilmed population census is, however, available inexpensively from various government agencies.

The census has been compiled by both the New York colonial and state governments and the federal government.

Colonial Census. The Upper Hudson region in the Colonial period was home to such varied ethnic groups as the Dutch, English, Palatine Germans, Scotch, Blacks and Irish. The colony was in a central and precarious position between French, English, and Native-American settlements, and was regularly involved in war or military preparations. There was a need then for an accurate accounting of its population. Three censuses of the Albany area were done and the originals are in manuscript form; nearly all have been reprinted in various histories. These colonial censuses have meager amounts of information but are still important because they are the only adequate source of statistical information for these early years.

Federal Census. The federal government has always been, and continues today to be, the largest gatherer of statistical data. It began this search for information in 1790 shortly after the Revolution. The decennial censuses are available in both statistical and population forms.

The population census taken from 1790 to 1840 included only the name of the head of family and numbers of persons, ages, sexes, and races in each family. These early censuses are valuable chiefly

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for their statistical information. They can be used to discuss family size, or to draw conclusions about the relative ages of husbands and wives, or how old they were when they had children. This can be compared to other eras to see if patterns emerge.

Major changes were made in the federal census in 1850 and continued thereafter, the most important being the addition of each person's name, occupation, citizenship, marital status and other data. The censuses from this year and succeeding years are progressively more complete, increasing their value for a variety of research uses and for classroom use. This information is a good base for talking about family structures such as extended families, supporting elderly parents, or the relative difficulties of supporting nine children on the earnings of a tinsmith.

The population censuses of 1790-1910 are available in microfilm only and in research libraries, but the printed statistical censuses for the same years are usually available also in public libraries. The statistical census becomes increasingly useful also because of the increasing number of questions asked by the census-taker after 1850.

State Census. New York State, possibly because of its rapid development after the building of the turnpike and canal systems and because of its rapid population increase, began to gather population census data in 1825 and did so every ten years until 1925, except for an interval from 1880 to 1900 when a census was taken instead in 1892.

The state took the federal census as its model, and therefore has only the head of family's name for 1825, 1835, and 1845. Beginning in 1855, this changed to include every family member's name. The state census makes it possible for researchers of New York State history to have a census available every five instead of ten years.

There are also statistical census reports for all the years of the state census and a particularly helpful census report published in 1855 which includes cumulative statistical census information about New York from the colonial period to 1855.

Special Censuses. Government has been interested in gathering statistical information about special subjects as well as general population data. From 1850 to 1880 federal census takers gathered detailed information on manufactures, agriculture, mortality, and social statistics. The agricultural census, for instance, lists each individual farmer with over 50 questions asked from how much land is cultivated to how many pigs and sheep are bred. The manufactures census gives the name of each manufacturer with details on how many employees, how much raw material was used, and what was the value of the production. The mortality census lists each person who died during the census year with details on the cause of death, etc., and the social statistics census provides data on local educational, religious and charitable institutions. A census

taken only in 1880 was that of the Defective, Delinquent, and Dependent Classes, which lists persons in prisons, asylums, and, perhaps most interesting to students, in orphan asylums.

These special schedules are among the most detailed sources for their particular subject areas and may be used separately or with other source materials for a variety of educational objectives. They fill out many details on the economic structure of a community.

Educational Skills and Understandings

In the past most history and history textbooks were written with a strong emphasis on the prominent leaders and significant individual events, i.e. the kings, founding fathers and other "Great White Men" of history.

Recently, historians have begun to write about the other people so long ignored by textbooks; women, families, ethnic groups--the great anonymous population. This "New History" utilizes census data to a great extent because of the insight it provides into the lives of the average person. This insight is one of the primary goals of using census examples with students, for they will learn that each person, no matter how seemingly insignificant, has relationships with family, neighborhood, city and nation and is therefore to be valued. In addition, when consecutive censuses are used of the same place, an understanding of how a community changes over time is gained. A city block may change in many ways--racially, ethnically, economically, and socially; the census is perhaps the best way of depicting these changes for students.

Using both the population and special schedules will help account for the government's great interest in gathering additional data. As they mature, students will note that whether it is government, their employer, the school system or their church, all modern bureaucratic structures are interested in counting heads for various purposes. In using these historical censuses, students will learn the function of statistics gathering.

By working with these records, students will learn to take amounts of raw data and compile information in groups. After they have done so, they must develop skills in critical thinking to "process" the data and draw logical conclusions about what it might mean. Developing and testing these conclusions is a tremendously valuable skill for students to develop.

The first thing to remember about the population (name) census records is that as a general rule they are only available in microfilm This is both bad and good. Bad because microfilm requires access to special equipment in or near the classroom, but good for two reasons. First, because it is on film, it is reproducible easily, and copies of the census films for a particular locality can be purchased

for a moderate cost for each school district. Secondly, because adequate, if not perfect, printouts can be made from films.

Microfilms of federal censuses may be purchased from the National Archives in Washington, D.C., although the films of the various New York State censuses may only be purchased from the Utah Genealogical Society through a rather complicated process.

The microfilms of the entire federal census of the state from 1790 to 1910 are available at the New York State Library as well as the films of state census for such Upper Hudson counties as Albany, Greene, Columbia, Rensselaer, and Washington. The State Archives has the original federal and state census of Albany County for the following years: 1855, 1860, 1865, 1870, 1875, 1880, 1892, and 1905. The Archives also has the entire original census of the state for 1915 and 1925.

Another source for original census records is the county clerk of each county (except Albany), as the clerks were required to file these records.

When searching for census records the best guide is available from the Gifts and Exchange section of the State Library for three dollars and is entitled *New York State Census Records 1790-1925.* This booklet explains in detail the location of all the federal and state census records, whether they are original or microfilm, and what questions were asked in each census.

The statistical census reports are all available from the State Library and may also be available in the university and larger public libraries in your area.

Summary

In summary, the historical census can be used by teachers and students to prove that we all are "numbers" at certain times, but that we also are individuals whose significance is as worthy of understanding as the founding fathers. Census records provide students with a direct personal contact to individuals in the past, giving the common people in history names, families, and lives that students recognize and understand.

Activities

(1) Assign students to be members of families listed in the census. Each student then can research the kind of job, clothing, or activities that would have been appropriate for their person. Then, meeting as a family group, they can draw a family portrait, write a family biography or write and act out a dialogue script of a family dinner table discussion.

(2) Many kinds of charts and statistical studies can be done using census records: ethnic origins of the neighborhood; number of children per family; age of parents at birth of first children; occupations. Similar studies can be made with the families of

students in class and comparisons drawn.

(3) Use mortality censuses as the basis for studies of health and health care practices in the past. Many of the diseases will be unfamiliar; old medical texts, dictionaries and even local doctors can provide information on what the diseases are, and what treatments were prescribed. Students might also interview parents, grandparents, and elderly citizens about home remedies practiced in the past.

(4) Use the census of manufactures to compile a list of the companies in a specific locality and categorize them by type. Then take a modern day business directory or telephone book yellow pages and make a list of the businesses in the same categories. Discuss reasons for any changes.

Suggested Readings

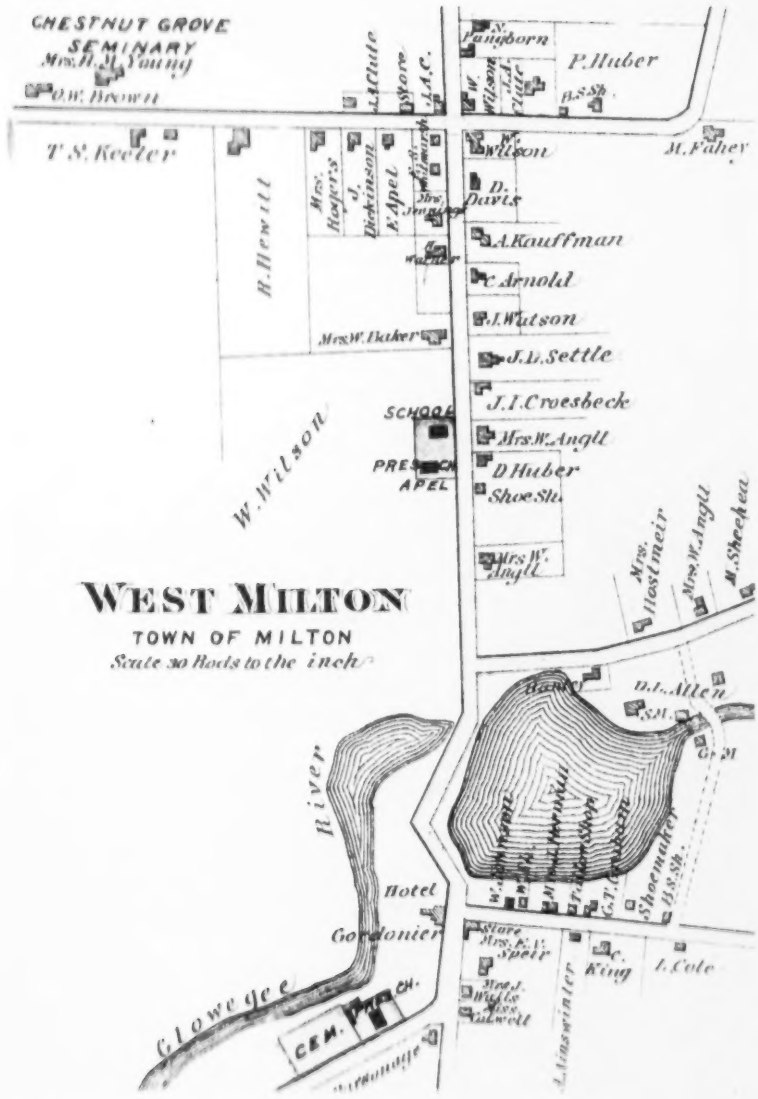
Donne, Carmen R. Delle. **Federal Census Schedules, 1850-1880: Primary Sources for Historical Research.** Washington: National Archives, 1973.

Douglas, Marilyn and Melinda Yates. **New York State Census Records 1790-1925.** Albany: New York State Library, 1981.

Hough, Franklin B. **Census of the State of New York for 1855.** Albany: Charles Van Benthuysen, 1857. See: Introduction: pp iii-lxvi.

National Archives Trust Fund Board. **Federal Population Censuses, 1790-1890; A Catalog of Microfilm Copies of the Schedules.** Washington: National Archives Trust Fund Board, 1979.

Same. **1900 Federal Population Census: A Catalog of Microfilm Copies of the Schedules.** Washington: National Archives Trust Fund Board, 1979.



This is an inset map of the Village of West Milton from the ***Combination Atlas of Saratoga and Ballston,*** *1876. It is useful for pinpointing locations of property, buildings and natural features, and for studies of historic land use. County and city atlases were made for communities all over New York State in the mid-19th century.*

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VII. Cartographic Resources

Introduction

It has been traditional for history to be taught chronologically as though human events are ordered by clocks and calendars. Even though historians have generally ignored the spatial dimension of history, it is equally important for historical study. Even more so for local history where geographical boundaries are limited and the effect of the natural landscape and man's changes in the landscape are directly evident. Understanding this assumption immediately highlights the importance of cartographic records or maps, atlases and gazetteers, all of which are in plentiful supply for the student of Upper Hudson history. These geographic resources may be in manuscript or printed form, historical or current, but no matter what their age or condition, they all contain primary material for the history of the region.

Kinds of Cartographic Records

Atlases. An atlas is essentially a bound collection of maps with a gazetteer of place names and textual description sometimes added. It may be as current as the latest *Mobil Road Atlas* or as ancient as a 16th century Mercator atlas of the world.

General world and national atlases, whether old or new, help primarily to orient students to the geographic placement of this region, that is, its place on the "Big Blue Marble."

State atlases which include individual county and regional maps are drawn at a large scale, giving more detail, and contain more local place names, boundaries, roads, and water routes.

State atlases of New York were published in the years 1829, 1839, 1871, 1891, and 1905 by various publishers, government and private, while modern atlases have been issued both privately and by such agencies as the State Department of Transportation. The first atlas of New York was compiled in 1829 by the Surveyor-General and is known as the Burr Atlas after its chief cartographer, David H. Burr. This atlas, both accurate and artistic, depicts each county individually, showing turnpikes, grist and saw mills, town bounds, churches and other man-made structures. Those atlases published in later years, though not as beautifully executed as Burr's Atlas, often have gazetteers and descriptive text and photographic illustrations.

In the late 19th century, 1860 to 1900, an entirely different genre of atlas was produced by several commercial map companies--the county and city atlas. These atlases were the most detailed and large scale maps of local communities drawn up to that time, and nothing quite like them has again been published.

The county atlases (Albany-Schenectady, 1866; Rensselaer, 1876; Columbia, 1876; Saratoga, 1866 and Greene, 1867) have individual maps for each town and inset maps for each city and village. The town and village maps not only indicate roads and buildings, but also all real property owners' names. The county atlases are one of the best sources for study of land use and ownership.

The city atlases (Albany, 1876; Troy, 1881; Ballston and Saratoga, 1876; and Schenectady, 1880 and 1905) are arranged with individual maps for each ward or part of a ward. These large scale atlases depict streets, buildings, and lot sizes and shape, although there are no landowners' names shown.

The increasing growth and industrialization of urban areas and the concomitant danger of fire led to the creation of the final type of atlas to be mentioned here, that is the fire insurance atlas, frequently called a Sanborn atlas, after its chief publishing company, the Sanborn Map Company. These maps were compiled and bound into atlases from about 1875 until the Second World War for cities all over the United States.

Sanborn maps and atlases are the most detailed cartographic record of urban geography during the years of their compilation. The maps are very large scale (one inch on the map equalling from 50 to 400 feet on the ground). Through a coded system of numbers, colors, letters and symbols, it is possible to determine the size and shape of buildings, their construction materials, roof type, number of windows, heating plant type, and many other details.

Fire insurance atlases were made for cities throughout the Upper Hudson, including Albany, 1876, 1892, 1935; Schenectady, 1930; Troy, 1875; and Hudson in 1884. Small cities and villages were often mapped by the Sanborn army of mapmakers, so the search for these shouldn't be given up too quickly. For instance, the 1892 Albany atlas has maps for Coeymans, Coeymans Junction, Clarksville, Rensselaerville, Altamont, Guilderland Center, and South Bethlehem. The 1875 Troy atlas includes West Troy and Green Island.

Besides the fire insurance atlases a small group of individual insurance plans for Upper Hudson factories were drawn in the mid-1880's. Plants such as the Albany Brewing Company and the Aetna Mills in Lansingburgh are shown on individual plans with descriptive text material describing the construction of the buildings. These plans are quite rare and available locally only at the New York State Library.

Maps. Modern maps of the world, nation, and state are available from commercial publishers in a wide variety of scales and themes. Like their atlas counterparts, they provide an overall orientation to the geographical location of the Upper Hudson.

One large scale series of maps produced by the U. S. Geological Survey is the topographical map series at 1:24000 (1 inch equals 2000 feet). These are detailed, colored maps showing both natural and man-made features. Each state is mapped in units called quadrangles, and Albany county, for example, requires about 12 quadrangles to be completely mapped. Topographic maps have been compiled since about 1885, providing an excellent source for tracing land-man relationships for nearly a century.

Other useful current maps are the U. S. Geological Survey and New York State Geological Survey geological maps and the U. S. Soil Conservation Service soil maps of the region. A few years ago, for example, an excellent geological map with an historical text on the Pine Bush was issued by the State Geological Survey.

Historical maps, in manuscript and printed form of the Upper Hudson region may be found tracing back to the Dutch period of settlement. The earliest of the area is a 1632 map of Rensselaerswyck, an area which included both sides of the Hudson from just south of Albany north to the Mohawk. Most early maps showing the Upper Hudson, at least until the Revolutionary War era, were small scale and contained little detail. With the continued growth of older cities such as Albany and the emergence of new cities such as Troy, large scale mapping of the settled parts of the region began. In addition, the new political freedom enabled by the Revolution led to the formation of new townships which needed their boundaries surveyed and mapped. The Surveyor-General required this mapping, and several local towns and cities were mapped after 1790, including such places as Kinderhook and Germantown (1797) and Troy (1817).

Because of the unusual land tenure system in Albany and Rensselaer county, a system developed to protect the vast land-holdings of the Van Rensselaer family, there is available a large collection of manuscript maps and field notes of survey of hundreds of farms leased from the family. These maps are found scattered in many repositories in the region, but the largest group of them is at the State Library. These maps date from 1790 to 1820 and show each farmer's holdings with descriptions of the farm land. They are probably the most useful source for the study of local agricultural history for the years immediately following the Revolution.

By the mid-19th century, the Upper Hudson region was a mature, settled region with a strong agricultural base, a developing industrial economy and a major transportation and shipping center, using the newly completed canals and railroads. To depict this

region in a detailed manner required much larger maps than had previously been compiled. The maps of local counties and cities produced from about 1850 to 1870 tended to be large wall maps, up to six feet square, and were very detailed and included the names of real property owners in the rural area. They also have inset maps of many of the villages and marginal illustrations of important buildings. Maps were made for Albany county (1854), Rensselaer county (1862) and villages such as Kinderhook (1856).

In addition to general historical maps of the counties and local communities, there are available thematic maps of the region's railroads, canals and roads, including a bicycle route map published in 1892. These maps may be helpful for classroom work following particular themes in the development of the region.

By 1870, the advance of lithographic technology enabled the large scale, inexpensive production of illustrated prints and maps. Communities and rural villagers were proud to see their spot on the map, and they bought prints and maps in large numbers because they were so cheap. There was also a booming market for panoramic maps, also known as birds-eye views, many of which were printed by the Troy firm, L.H. Burleigh Company. Compiled from actual surveys and on-the-spot drawing, these maps are not only useful for locating geographical information, but also are wonderful pictorial illustrations of the "look" of local cities in the Gilded Age. Views were done of Troy, 1877; Albany, 1879; Cohoes, 1879 and other communities.

Maps produced after the turn of the century were compiled with greater frequency by government agencies, such as the local county highway deprtments, and were generally more accurate, though not often as well-detailed as earlier, commercially-published maps and atlases. Early automobile road maps from the Twenties and Thirties may prove interesting to students familiar with modern superhighway systems, for instance.

Gazetteers. Most of us are familiar with the place name gazetteers found at the end of most world atlases. However, there were several gazetteers of New York State printed from 1813 to 1870 which were considerably more complete. These works, usually arranged by county, not only gave place names but historical and geographical accounts of each place. Besides these descriptive accounts, they often have special sections devoted to statistical discussions of the history of land, agriculture, industry, military affairs and cultural resources of the state. These works, published in 1813, 1824, 1836, 1842, 1860 and 1870, might be more accurately described as geographies rather than gazetteers. They are available in many libraries, sometimes as reprints, and are a major source for factual historical information.

Educational Skills and Understandings

That there is no stable relationship between man and his environment is evident especially to children, who are very attuned to changes in their environment. Man has always tried to dominate the land, and, until recently, he has seemed unaware of the changes he has wrought upon the urban and rural landscape. Much of the history of mankind is primarily the story of these man-land relationships and maps are a basic source for studying that story. Because maps are simply a symbolic means of explaining the facts of geography, students using them will learn to interpret these facts for both the current environment and for the past landscapes which made up the Upper Hudson region.

This region was a sparsely settled wilderness area for over a century when, in succession, it became the seat of decisive military campaigns, two major canals, an extensive railroad network, a nationally recognized industrial complex, some of the largest government office buildings in the U.S., and a proliferation of bedroom communities. Throughout its history it has been a center of higher education, including two major universities and many colleges. All these changes in purpose and function over the last 350 years are depicted on maps. Classroom projects using historical maps will develop students' historical appreciation and understanding about their communities. Projects combining other sources, such as census records and maps, will help students understand the significant changes and growth-decline patterns within their communities. Relationships of economic growth, industrial change, and social change are all found evident in maps as students begin to interpret the changing uses of land. By examining early maps and gazetteers, students will learn the origin of place names around them; why a community settled on a particular river, near a falls, or around a railroad station; and how these early settlement decisions set patterns of growth in their locality. Place name study will also give the students an indication of the early ethnic settlement patterns of their town.

By using historical and modern maps in the classroom students will learn how to read a map, a useful tool that will stay with them all their lives. An interesting project would be for students to draw a map of their neighborhood and compare them with maps of the same area at various times to show changes that have taken place throughout the neighborhood's history.

Access

Cartographic resources are available from numerous sources. Government has become the major producer and distributor of modern maps. It should also be noted that official agencies are holders of large numbers of historical maps as well.

Federal agencies, such as the U. S. Geological Survey and the Department of the Interior, print topographic, geological, and recreational maps which are available from those agencies and often from local book, stationery, and sporting goods stores. The National Cartographic Information Center (NCIC) in Reston, Virginia is happy to answer enquiries regarding all types of federal mapping. The New York State Department of Transportation maintains a Map Information Unit which performs a similar service, on a state level, as the NCIC.

There are several state agencies which have historical maps of the Upper Hudson area. The State Archives, for example, has records and maps of the Department of State, Audit and Control, and Transporation. In the Archives, one may find early town boundaries maps, land patent surveys, and railroad and canal maps from the late 18th century to the present. The Office of General Services, Bureau of Land Management also has historical maps.

The New York State Library has the largest local collection of cartographic material, both current and historical. Researchers will find here the county and city maps and atlases, gazetteers, fire insurance maps and modern topographic maps mentioned in this chapter. A general descriptive brochure entitled *Cartographic Resources and Services of the New York State Library* is available from the library.

Other local sources are public and university libraries for current maps and county clerks offices and historical societies for historical cartographic records. Local commercial map publishers, such as JIMAPCO, for up-to-date maps, and Historic Urban Plans, Ithaca, for facsimiles of birds-eye views of cities, may be helpful in map research.

Historical maps are frequently large and fragile, so research libraries restrict their use and copying. Photocopying is usually not allowed, although photography is acceptable. Maps also rarely circulate and are usually kept in the library for reference use.

Summary

The Upper Hudson metropolitan region has a long, ever-changing past, which is especially well detailed on maps and atlases. The appeal of pictorial information as illustrated by cartographic records should be a prime tool for local historical education.

Activities

(1) Gazetteers can be used for a project on place names. Students can trace how various cities, villages, and towns in their localities were named, and who the first settlers were. They can also do genealogy charts showing how and when municipalities have

developed, and how they have divided and consolidated over the years.
(2) Students can trace the development of roads over a period of years by comparing a series of maps. They can conjecture, then do research to find out why certain routes have developed.
(3) Use historical maps in comparison to modern maps to identify changes in use of land or changes in topography. Then account for the changes.
(4) Maps may be used to show settlement patterns. Students can begin by drawing a copy of an early map of their community. Then prepare overlays showing succeeding growth or changes.

Suggested Readings

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Burr, David H. **An Atlas of the State of New York.** New York: D. H. Burr, 1829.

Hebert, John R., comp. **Panoramic Maps of Anglo-American Cities.** Washington: Library of Congress, 1974.

Mix, David E. E. **Catalogue of Maps and Surveys in the Office of the Secretary of State, State Engineer and Surveyor and Comptroller and New York State Library.** Albany: Charles Van Benthuysen, 1859.

Stephenson, Richard W. **Land Ownership Maps, A Checklist of Nineteenth Century United States County Maps in the Library of Congress,** Washington: Library of Congress, 1967.

U.S. Library of Congress. Geography and Map Division, **Fire Insurance Maps in the Library of Congress.** Washington: Library of Congress, 1981.

Wright, Albert H. and Ellis, W.W. **A Checklist of the County Atlases of New York,** Ithaca: author, 1943.

City and County Atlases: This list is selected and provides only a sample of the types of atlases available for local research. Check items listed in the section above and the catalogs of local libraries for other atlases.

Beers, J.B. & Co. **Combination Atlas of Saratoga and Ballston.** New York: J.B. Beers, 1876.

Beers, F.W. **County Atlas of Rensselaer, New York.** New York: F.J. Beers, 1876.

Beers, S.N., D.G. et al. **New Topographical Atlas of the Counties of Albany and Schenectady, New York.** Philadephia: Stone and Stewart Publ., 1866.

Beers, Ellis and Co. **Atlas of Columbia County, New York.** New York: Beers, Ellis and Co., 1888.

Hopkins, G.M. **City Atlas of Troy, New York.** Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins 1881.

Sanborn Map Co. **Insurance Maps of Schenectady, New York.** New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1914-29.

Sanborn Map and Publishing Co. **Insurance Plans of Albany, New York.** 2 vols. New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1876.

Stone and Steward Publ. **New Topographical Atlas of Washington County, New York.** Philadelphia: Stone and Stewart Publ. 1866.

Albany Register.

[VOLUME X.] MONDAY, AUGUST 13, 1798. [NUMBER 680.]

Published every MONDAY and FRIDAY by BARBER & SOUTHWICK.—SUBSCRIPTION, ADVERTISEMENTS &c. for the REGISTER, will be received at their Printing Office, sign of FAME's STATUE, STATE STREET, or at their Book Store, two doors North of the City Hall.

Wells & Hilton,

FOR SALE,

LOTS OF LAND,

JOHN STAFFORD,

HAS FOR SALE,

LIQUORS,

FOR SALE,

LOTS OF LAND,

New-York State Road LOTTERY.

No. I.

COTTON YARN.

Job Davis & Co.

JACOB LORILLARD,

TOBACCO, SNUFF & LEATHER,

STATE STREET, ALBANY.

SEGARS.

Received this Day,

AND FOR SALE, BY

MICHAEL BEGLEY,

COURT STREET, ALBANY,

Tobacco Factory,

MYNDERT LANSING,

CANCERS.

J. D. FLEMING,

AMOS BROAD,

HAT FACTORY.

JOB DAVIS, & Co.

BREWERY

Peter Gansevoort,

DOBBS

Manufactory.

Leather Store.

HENRY GUEST, Jun.

Has for Sale,

LEATHER,

SPANISH HIDES,

Thomas Gould,

PRIME PORK and MEAL,

THE NORTHERN

MAIL STAGE,

David M'Cartee,

To be Sold,

*This front page of the **Albany Register** dated 1798 is filled with interesting advertisements, such as a Negro man for sale; a cabinetmaker who makes everything from cradles to coffins, and a brewery paying for empty bottles. All provide material for student research and discussion.*

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VIII. Newspapers

Introduction

Whether they are read or just used to wrap up fish and yesterday's leftovers, newspapers are probably the most omnipresent publication in our daily lives. They are one of the first publications which children notice in their homes (especially the funny papers) even before they have learned to read and, of course, for many their first job is being a newspaper boy or girl. The role of newspapers, particularly the special student editions, has long been considered a staple of the curriculum. However, historical newspapers have not had a very strong role in the teaching of history and local history. This chapter will describe briefly some of the ways in which newspapers may be used to give students a feel for daily life in the Upper Hudson region many years ago.

Newspapers as a Resource

Newspapers have been published in the region since the late 18th century: in Albany since 1771; Hudson, 1785; Troy, 1795 and Ballston, 1798. These papers, along with almanacs, broadsides and the Bible provided the bulk of the average literate person's reading matter, until the later founding of mechanic's and other public libraries supplied a wider variety. However, it is important to remember that these early, pre-1830 newspapers were published for subscribers, who got most of their local news via the grapevine or over their neighbor's fence. Thus there is not much local press coverage beyond notices of marriages, obituaries and advertisements. Most of the news published was about national and international affairs. In addition, because the country printers who published these papers usually did not make their expenses by selling enough papers, they would often become the voices of political parties. This worked wonders for the printer's profit and loss statement, if his party won, because he was then awarded other job printing, including legal notices, a practice not unknown to modern local politics and publishing.

The numbers and variety of local newspapers continued to grow throughout the 19th century; by 1860 Albany and Troy had 13 and 6 newspapers respectively. Also, many papers were issued for only a few months or years before folding. Albany, for instance, had nearly 100 different newspapers published between 1771 and 1860. During the present century, though newspaper circulation has actually

risen, the number of different newspapers has declined to the point where most metropolitan areas have only one or two dailies.

From 1830 onward newspapers also increased in size, from a few pages to 15 or 20 or more. This gave space for more local news and a greater variety of local reporting and editorializing. A great favor for local historians.

Probably the major source of antiquarian material in early newspapers, and certainly a useful source for those issued years later, are the advertisements by local merchants and tradesmen for drugs, boot and shoe making, horses and farms for sale, blank legal forms, lumber and other kinds of services and products. Social values are reflected in advertisements. Until about 1827, when slavery finally ended in the state, notices appeared for the sale of a "Negro wench with a child" and for the return of runaway slaves. Students see a different time period clearly illuminated in a notice for the return of a "runaway" apprentice, Dow F. Thurber, sixteen years old, for which the splendid reward of six cents is offered. Intriguing also to students are ads for mysterious goods such as twenty-three tierces of clayed sugar, kitefoot tobacco, ravensduck, india lutestrings and tabby thicksetts.

Other local news included ads for new books recently received by the town stationer, for a new popular theater production called "Alfonso, King of Brazil," steamboat and stage line schedules and legal notices for land sales, court proceedings and notices to the general public by harassed husbands refusing responsibility for any further debts contracted by their wives.

Because these dailies, sometimes weeklies, were so often partisan, political campaigners often placed announcements for their candidates and the newspaper printed long political essays praising favorite candidates and vilifying the opponents. The results of the local, state and national elections were usually given detailed coverage.

Although local printers seemed sometimes more concerned about events in South America or the Middle East, they did publish stories describing the accidents, disasters, fires and important social events which occurred in the region. Later in the century and thereafter, sporting events, especially baseball and football matches, became prime topics.

Newspapers were the principal barometer of local affairs and are the foundation of research in local history studies.

Educational Skills and Understandings

To the businessman and daily newspaper reader, there is nothing quite so useless as last week's paper. However, the current affairs emphasis of dailies makes them excellent historical sources because of their detailed description of everyday events. The

advertisements, political editorials and the type of feature articles published, all reflect the current interests and opinions of the publisher and the community at large. Students will learn a great deal about what were moving events and important parts of the community's daily existence--the price of butter in Cohoes in 1890, what actually happened during the steelworkers strike in Troy in 1877, how many canal boats left the Albany Basin on a summer's day in 1842 and what were the local issues in the election of 1918.

While reading these newspapers, students can compare them with today's dailies and evaluate both for accuracy, bias, literary worth and so forth. Accuracy of reporting can be checked against other sources; bias can be discovered in both editorials and more subtly in the contents of articles; opinion versus fact can be explored, and two or more dailies can be compared on their reporting of the same event. All these techniques can be used to help students learn to critically evaluate the historical news. The result will be more critical observers of current new reporting by whatever means, whether newspaper, radio or television. Reading old-fashioned advertisements will show students that the same promotional techniques have always been used, although the means have become more sophisticated today. This will teach them to demand more of a product than just testimonial opinion and make them better informed consumers.

Access

Newspapers are paradoxically the most commonly available current publications but become scarce rather soon after they are read. In fact, researchers using them find it almost always necessary to use microfilm. There are two chief reasons for this situation. First of all, newspapers, even when they survive and are given to libraries, rarely are stored in hard copy by those libraries because their large size creates a major problem. Thus librarians can more efficiently store the newspapers on microfilm. Secondly, newspapers published after about 1870 were usually printed on highly acidic paper, became very brittle and deteriorated rapidly. In order to save the information, if not the actual newspaper itself, many libraries have again turned to microfilm storage. All this means that researchers will find the newspaper readily available on microfilm. Microfilm reader-printers are found in most libraries and make an adequate, if not perfect, print from the film. Original papers can sometimes be found in historical societies, usually in scattered issues only and dailies dated before 1870 are often still available in hard copy.

To locate newspapers, in whatever form, there are several union lists describing which newspapers are still extant and where they can be found. Two useful publications for finding these lists and also copies of microfilmed newspapers are: *Bibliographies and*

Lists of New York State Newspapers: An Annotated Guide (1981) and *A Checklist of Newspapers in Microform in the New York State Library* (1979) both of which are available from the State Library.

Primary locations in the Upper Hudson region for finding newspapers are the State Library, public libraries, local university libraries, historical societies and sometimes the newspaper publisher's files. Single issues of papers will sometimes turn up at flea markets and antiquarian bookshops, but these are purely serendipitous.

Newspapers, the daily accounting of life in the Upper Hudson region from the Revolutionary War era to the present are the lifeline to the past for teachers and students of local history.

Activities

(1) Students can compile a history of humor by scanning newspapers from various decades for amusing anecdotes, cartoons, poems, limericks and sayings.

(2) As a comparative activity, have students categorize newspaper articles in a current and an historic newspaper according to type of news reported, e.g.: local; state; national; international; or: political; social; entertainment; advertisement. Differences and similarities can then be discussed.

(3) Use newspapers to compile a list of household goods needed to set up "housekeeping," and what the cost would be. Students might also make up a shopping list for feeding their family for a week, then use the newspaper to make comparative lists over a series of years on the availability and cost of buying the needed items.

(4) Newspapers can provide the basis for a study of leisure-time activities in a locality in the past. Students might identify all the forms of entertainment discussed in newspapers for various periods. In some cases, they will need to do further research to find out what the sporting events, social happenings, or theatrical events entailed. Then they can compile a written, and illustrated history of leisure in their area.

(5) Using the information provided in a nineteenth century newspaper, have students write and videotape a television "newscast from the past."

Suggested Readings

Brigham, Clarence S. **History and Bibliography of American Newspapers 1690-1820.** Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1947.

Gregory, Winifred, ed. **American Newspapers, 1821-1936. A Union List of Files Available in the United States and Canada.** New York: H.W. Wilson, 1937.

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New York State Library. **A Checklist of Newspapers in Microform in the New York State Library.** Albany: New York State Library, 1979.

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This photograph provides a view of Troy, New York during a flood in 1886. Analysis of photographs of both the everyday and the extraordinary provides a detailed image of past events and community life.

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IX. Pictorial Sources

Introduction

"A picture is worth a thousand words." Perhaps so, perhaps not--the truth of this old saw being dependent both upon subject of the picture and its use. Whichever the case, it cannot be denied that pictures are ubiquitous communicators in our visually-oriented culture. Thus it is so with historical pictures of local communities. Note, for example, that national fast-food restaurants, in order to acquire a local cachet, have begun using enlarged pictures of locally important sites as wall decorations. And, of course, visual images have always been important teaching tools.

This chapter will discuss several kinds of pictures, which are here considered to be one-dimensional, visual images of persons, places or subjects which can be found singly, bound in books or brought together in a collection. Illustrated broadsides and sheet music covers are also important sources of visual historical information.

Kinds of Pictorial Sources

Prints. The oldest form of illustration available for most Upper Hudson communities is the print. The earliest prints of the Upper Hduson were made by engraving images on a copper plate, which was then covered with ink and impressed on a sheet of paper. After about 1830, print making was increasingly done by lithography, that is by drawing the picture with grease crayon on a stone surface.

Most prints of the Upper Hudson region date from the late 18th century, there being no contemporary prints which depict places or scenes before then. Most pictorial evidence from the early Dutch colonial period is found in oil portraits. There are no prints of the Dutch period which show the area as it actually was, and any prints for these early years are inferred from historical accounts and views of other places, principally New Amsterdam and 17th century Holland.

During the late colonial period there were a few engravings such as those of Cohoes Falls made by English artists, but most prints of the Upper Hudson are from the early nineteenth century such as those by the travelers Jacques Milbert in 1827 and William Henry Bartlett in 1835, who sketched views of Albany, Hudson, Troy, Saratoga and Lake George.

By 1840, lithography, because it was a cheaper and more flexible printing process, began to make possible the mass printing of views, portraits, and depictions of historical events by firms such as Currier and Ives and Charles Magnus. From this period, then, one finds a larger number of local views which can be used in local history study. Lithography also made possible the introduction of illustrated sheet music covers, and there are many covers with Upper Hudson views.

Photographs. The major development, in terms of quantity and exact representation of places and people of the region was, of course, photography. Beginning with tin-types and daguerreotypes, and continuing to the present day paper print, there are photographs beyond count of the region's history. Everything from formal family and individual portraits to views of local events, such as parades, and scenes of railroad and canal construction are available. And, as the saying goes "The camera never lies." Photos are nearly exact representations of their subjects without the bias or aesthetic viewpoint of an artist intruding on the "facts" of the scene. They make an excellent counter-balance to the often idealized view of the Upper Hudson represented by engravings or lithographs.

Postcards. Photographic postcards became increasingly popular after the Civil War, and many of them are available of local scenes, buildings and natural features. Postcards have one feature which photographs lack quite often, that is name, date and place identification. This makes them useful in identifying buildings and other landmarks which may have disappeared during "urban renewal." Postcards can be used also to add color to the illustration of local history study since most photographs of historical interest are generally black and white.

Sheet Music. An unusual source of interesting visual and perhaps aural material for the classroom are sheet music covers from the 19th century. Because the Upper Hudson area was the state's capital region, as well as a center of canal, railroad and industrial development, many songs, sometimes quite humorous, were composed about governors and politics, life on the canal, cities of the region and local military and other societies. The covers of song sheets, such as the *Trojan Quick Step, Gov. Yates' March* or *Low Bridge*, can be used to illustrate local historical studies and, in addition, a music teacher might wish to integrate the cover illustration with the music itself in the classroom. Everyone knows the important part which music plays in student life, especially the "punk rock" and "heavy metal"varieties. Use of the sheet music and cover in a musical and pictorial combination provides an excellent opportunity to illustrate daily life and popular pastimes of the historical Upper Hudson.

Broadsides and Posters. Another large group of materials which are both visual and textual and easily accessible for classroom use are broadsides and posters. Though broadsides and posters date from the late 17th century in New York, there were only a scattered few until about 1800, when political parties began to issue many during political campaigns. The broadside tacked up on the tavern wall was a typical way to "sell" the candidate and his views on such issues as canal development, western lands and state finances. Besides newspapers, broadsides were the chief advertising medium, and they were used to promote everything from land and cattle to stoves and medicine. The same type of testimonial and exaggerated claims made by much advertising today was used by broadsides and students may note that the sales techniques remain the same.

Posters and broadsides can also be found for such historical themes as the anti-rent wars in the hill country of Albany and Rensselaer counties, Civil War enlistment, theaters, circuses, county fairs and, from more recent history, World Wars I and II.

Whether or not posters and broadsides include much text, they all have a direct visual impact, making their point and providing information immediately. Like all other picture sources they provide a clear and informative idea of past life in the Upper Hudson region.

Educational Skills and Understandings

The use of pictures, posters and other historical pictorial sources gives students an accurate and sometimes exact notion of how people and places of the past really looked. For instance, before the age of space travel, no one had ever seen North America in toto, and any idea of its shape and size came from maps. Since man has hurtled through space and photographed the continent, we now have an accurate notion of its appearance and this has changed many of our conceptions of man and his relation to his environment. Similarly, students will have better conceptions about the history of this region once they have seen pictorial representations of it. In addition, textual sources will make a great deal more sense when related to a picture of, for example, a canal worker, a steel plant in Troy or a county fair in Columbia County.

Historical views of city streets and natural features such as the Cohoes Falls and the riverfront from Hudson to Troy when used in combination with present-day photos furnish students with a comparative idea of how topography changes under the dominant hand of mankind, for better or worse. The redevelopment of inner cities to their original condition will mean more when photos and postcards of the same areas in their heyday can be seen.

Additionally, when prints and photographs are examined closely by students their aesthetic sense is enlarged, and they learn to "see" rather than just glance at other objects in their daily surroundings,

making them more critical observers.

Broadsides and posters can be used to introduce students to new subjects such as political parties and campaigns and as examples of earlier means of mass communication before the electronic age.

Access

Perhaps the best place for students and teachers to begin a search for interesting historical photographs is right at home. Checking great-grandma's scrapbooks and shoeboxes of old family photos may turn up some exciting material about both the family and the community. Another possible location for a serendipitous search for pictures is a local antique store. Also try the flea markets, garage sales and auctions, as these are all good sources.

Later, a more organized search can be made in libraries, historical societies and museums. The State Library, for example, has extensive collections of prints, photographs, posters and sheet music, a great deal of which are about the Upper Hudson region. That library also has several thousand photos of the Delaware and Hudson Railway's trains and station houses dating from about 1890 to 1930.

The State Archives also has a photographic collection. Local public libraries, museums and historical societies all have pictorial material which they will make available, usually with few restrictions. When using libraries, some researchers bring along a camera to make photographic reproductions because some institutions will not allow, or do not own, the equipment for photocopying pictures. Although rare, some institutions charge a fee for publication or reproduction of items in their collections, so check this first before making multiple copies of such items.

Summary

Pictorial resources, especially photographs and postcards, are available in large numbers and teachers may find the more difficult task to be deciding what to use rather than how to find the sources. Pictures have both an immediate visual impact and a long-lasting eductional value by providing a glimpse, no matter how fleeting, of the historical Upper Hudson region.

Activities

(1) Have students inventory all the items shown in a photograph; this will help them learn to look closely at pictographic sources. Then make a list of all the facts they can objectively conclude from the photograph. Finally, make a list of those facts which can be implied from the photograph.

(2) Have students assume the identity of a person or object in a photograph and write a stream-of-consciousness monologue as the photograph is being taken.

(3) Use photocopies of photographs of street scenes and homes. Then cut the homes and businesses out, fit them together, and create a pictorial map of a particular street or section of a neighborhood.
(4) Photographs can serve as the basic information for a study of clothing over a series of years. Using photographs of men, women and children for varying decades, let students identify changes in quantities of clothing worn, lengths, varying styles, and the condition or function.

Suggested Readings.

Marzio, Peter C. **The Democratic Art, Chromolithography 1840-1900, Pictures for a 19th Century America.** Boston: David R. Godine, 1979.

Morse, John D., ed. **Prints in and of America to 1850.** Winterthur Conference Report 1970. Winterthur, Del: H. F. duPont Winterthur Museum, 1970.

Novotny, Ann, ed. **Picture Sources 3: Collections of Prints and Photographs in the U.S. and Canada.** New York: Special Libraries Association, 1975.

U.S. Library of Congress. **Catalog of Broadsides in the Rare Book Division.** 4 vols. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1972.

Weinstein, Robert A. and Larry Booth. **Collection, Use and Care of Historical Photographs.** Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1976.

Common 19th century kitchen utensils such as a pie crimper, butter mold, and sugar snips will be curious and probably unfamiliar to children of the age of convenience foods. Such tools imply a much different lifestyle and can provide much "food" for thought.

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X. Material Culture

John L. Polnak

Introduction

Throughout time most people have not left written records. However, their stories are not lost; they are "written" in the objects from their environment. Some of the primary sources for researching the life of a slave are manacles, auction blocks, hoes and cotton gins. With practice and guidance those objects can be read as clearly as their penned counterparts.

Objects are not only useful in filling voids in the literature but also as supplemental learning aids. The French and Indian Wars take on new meanings when students handle the prized beaver pelt or see how luxurious and elegant the finished product, the felt hat, really was. Bustles, hoops and high button shoes need to be seen to be appreciated or even understood.

The world is filled with objects and the thought of using them as learning aids may seem overwhelming to the uninitiated. It is not as monumental a task as it appears. Many of the objects can be found in the closets, attics and garages of the neighborhood. A class or school sponsored museum day will not only be a festive break from the daily routine but also will provide teachers with an excellent inventory of objects that can be used throughout the year. For lack of a better term, these local treasure hunts will be referred to as attic searches.

When attic searches fail to yield the needed artifacts the next alternatives are local historians and historical societies, historic houses and museums. Two reference books are helpful. The *Federation Handbook* provides names, descriptions and locations of variety of resources in the Upper Hudson region. The *AAM Directory* lists by communities within each state, the museums and historic houses throughout the nation. The sites are also cross referenced by types of collections. The entire realm of material culture has been divided into eleven major categories by Robert G. Chenhall. Each category and its relevant subdivisions used here will be addressed for its appropriateness to the study of local history and the most likely locations for finding the desired objects.

Structures

This category contains the largest, most obvious, most accessible and probably least used artifacts of all. A community's buildings reflect its heritage. Did the settlement start near the waterfront or a rail station, a powerful waterfall or good farmland? Where is/was the business district, the manufacturing district, the residential district? Cohoes' Harmony Mills and neighboring workers' houses are good examples; the complex is almost self-explanatory. A community's optimism and pessimism is reflected in its structures. When did the founders have enough confidence in the settlement to turn to more substantial building materials like brick and stone? When were the public and municipal buildings erected? Are they modest structures or grandiose monuments? The nineteenth century Troy Savings Bank Music Hall and the twentieth century Empire State Plaza certainly are not products of a sagging economy or a despondent people. Earlier population distributions can be read from the size and location of the converted or vacant school buildings that dot the community's various places of worship.

Teachers, either alone or with the aid of the local historian, may interpret such structures during a walking tour. Unfortunately, however, many are gone. Historic houses, listed in the *Federation Handbook*, are accurate examples of past styles of local architecture. Photographs, prints, records and deeds, bird's eye views and insurance maps are satisfactory alternatives if there are no surviving examples. Occasionally, three dimensional models, like the Albany institute's model of Albany in 1695, are available for study.

Building Furnishings

By definition these are artifacts to be used in and around buildings for the purpose of providing comfort, care and pleasure to the occupants. There are four main subcategories.

A chronological review of furniture reveals changing tastes and attitudes not only in the motifs that ornament the pieces but also in the general lines and appearances of the pieces. As a rule only the finest pieces survive, but it can be assumed that these were the models that were emulated for the more utilitarian pieces.

A study of furniture also provides us a view of the standards of craftsmanship. The year 1840 is the generally accepted date for the introduction of machine-made furniture. To the purists it marks the end of grand era of cabinetry; to the social historian it marks the beginning of affordable furniture for a much larger segment of the population and the subsequent rippling effects of mass production, mass marketing and, for the Marxists, manipulation of the masses.

Specific pieces also reveal something about the lifestyles of their owners. Fire screens, boot scrapers and day beds are no longer in

great demand. On the other hand, stereo cabinets and TV stands are recent additions to the furniture dealers' stock.

Individual pieces of furniture are valuable for the study of craftsmanship. However, to interpret the quality and standards of living, several pieces from one era are needed.

The best sources for the study of these objects are historic houses. Some cover a wide time frame, such as Historic Cherry Hill in Albany. However, most houses focus on one era. Exemplary period rooms, from the early eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century, can be seen in the following houses, which are listed, in chronological order by date of construction: the Van Alen House in Kinderhook, Schuyler Mansion in Albany, the Hart-Cluett Mansion in Troy, Lyndhurst in Tarrytown, and the Casino in Saratoga Springs.

Museums also collect furniture, and some of their collections are usually on permanent display. Sometimes museums put together traveling or temporary exhibitions of furniture. It may be beneficial to check the exhibition calendar of local museums as the year's curriculum is being planned. Spinoffs of past exhibitions, such as catalogs, slide presentations and educational programs, may be available. If none of these are available the curator can serve as an excellent resource person. In a large museum such as the New York State Museum there is a curator of furniture. A smaller museum will have a generalist who serves as curator of all collections.

For this generation of students the term modern conveniences is a meaningless phrase. The predecessors of today's lighting devices, temperature control devices and plumbing fixtures are not within their memory. Historic houses usually have the appropriate artifacts for the time frame they are representing. However, the fireplaces are unused because of central heating and the candles on the mantle appear to be decorations under a portrait that is illuminated by an incandescent bulb. The impact on the students is diluted.

Museums also collect these artifacts, but the collections are usually random samplings rather than comprehensive, chronological overviews. Temporary or traveling exhibitions occasionally address one of these topics and generate one or more of the spinoffs already mentioned such as the catalog that accompanied the Albany Institute's stove show.

The days of limitless energy and resources are over and today's young people, like their forebearers, will have to find resourceful ways to conserve energy and water and increase the efficiency of light and heat in their environment. A study of earlier successes and failures may provide some answers or, at least, avoid the proverbial reinventing of the wheel.

Personal Artifacts

Clothing is one of the more revealing categories of artifacts. Changing tastes and attitudes are reflected in styles, colors and fabrics. Changing roles in the family, at home and at work are also reflected in the clothing. Technological advances altered not only the daily routines of people both in and out of the home but also the clothes worn to do those tasks. The introduction of aneline dyes in the nineteenth century and synthetic fabrics in the twentieth had a profound effect on all segments of society. There are even those who claim that the ratio of men and women and the fluctuations of the stock market can be read by interpreting the necklines and hemlines of the time.

Unfortunately, the best and most numerous examples of historic costumes that have survived are those articles that were worn the least. Wedding dresses and formal gowns abound; everyday garb is scarce. Although not a realistic view of daily life, the high style pieces are not without merit. They are usually in excellent condition and are accurate indicators of the tastes and attitudes of their times. Comparing "house dresses" of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries is difficult, because the roles and routines of the women who wore them were vastly different. However, by studying wedding gowns and formals those variables are minimized, because the function of those dresses has changed little over time.

Although clothing is often collected it is seldom exhibited because of its fragile nature. Periodically, temporary and traveling exhibitions, such as the Schenectady Museum's wedding gown exhibition of 1980 or the Cherry Hill exhibition at the Albany Institute in 1983, are set up as a part of a museum's educational programs. Photographs, paintings and prints may be an alternative if the actual artifacts are unavailable. And, for the truly adventurous teacher, there are companies that publish patterns for reproducing historic costumes.

Personal symbols is a new term that has crept into the jargon of the museum profession. It is a catchall category for artifacts that relate to an individual's beliefs, achievements, and status in the community. Included in this category are things like diplomas, fraternal rings, crucifixes and regal crowns. The best sources for these objects are the students themselves.

Tools and Equipment

In an industrial era, students do not comprehend the importance of tools to early artisans and craftsmen. The tools of a trade were valued items, carefully maintained and highly prized. The study of tools, their use and importance, can reflect much about working lives.

The list for this category, from safety pins to gas turbines, is endless. The objects can be used in a number of ways. A number of occupations from the same era, like the age of homespun, can be studied or one occupation, like homemaking, medicine, bookkeeping, or soldiering, can be examined over the course of time. A prominent museum for the former approach is Sturbridge Village in Sturbridge, Massachusetts; the latter is the Farmers' Museum in Cooperstown.

Extensive travel is not necessary. This category lends itself to attic searches and every community has at least one person with a collection that rivals their local museums. Historical societies and museums will have random samplings if not comprehensive collections and some will offer demonstrations like the annual Sheep to Shawl program which is offered at the Brookside Museum in Ballston Spa.

Transportation

In 1801, traveling from the White House to Monticello, President Jefferson and his horse had to ford seven rivers. Since that time developments in transportation stagger the imagination and each major advance has had a profound impact throughout all of society. The Upper Hudson region has frequently been the stage for those achievements. If travel is no object, there are museums entirely devoted to specific forms of transportation like the Railway Museum in Boothbay, Maine, the Canal Museum in Syracuse; the Carriage Museum in Stony Brook; or the Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. For complete listings of specialized museums refer to the *AAM Directory*.

Communication

Like transportation devices, major technological advances in communications equipment were and are being made at an ever increasing rate. They are very useful when studied chronologically; with each new development creating major changes in the life of the community. Attic searches may yield isolated examples and most museums will have a random sampling of the objects. Once again, temporary or traveling exhibitions and their subsequent spinoffs will be valuable resources and specialized museums in this field do exist. Another alternative is the industry itself which may develop and disseminate its own educational material as a community service. For example, most of the objects in the 1981 Telephone Exhibit at the Rensselaer County Junior Museum were loaned by the Bell Telephone Pioneers.

Recreational

Included in this category are toys, games, and equipment for sports, gambling and public entertainment. Some of these objects,

like the ball and the jump rope, are timeless. Others, like the hoop, have faded from the scene. Although historical learnings can be gleaned from an academic study of these objects, their true value may be their original purpose. They are fun!!! Attic searches will yield isolated examples and museums will have random samplings. Many of the objects are easily reproduced, even by the students themselves. Perhaps they may find playing checkers or walking on stilts as enjoyable as television and Pac Man.

Ceremonial Artifacts

This category is similar to the subcategory Personal Artifacts except that these objects are used by a group rather than an individual. It is not limited to religious artifacts but includes all ceremonial objects including governmental artifacts. The usefulness of this category depends on the particular community. Attics and museums will have random samplings but seldom comprehensive collections. The best source for these objects is the agencies themselves. For example, a historical review of religion in the community should start with the clergy. With few exceptions they will be knowledgeable, objective and very willing to help.

Summary

In conclusion, the use of objects in the classroom has tremendous potential. They are flexible learning aids that should be added to the repertoire of the teacher. For some students they will be excellent learning supplements and reinforcers; for others, especially the poorer readers, they will be priceless alternatives to the written word.

With practice and guidance teachers and students can acquire the skills needed to interpret objects. However, they should not hesitate to call upon the professionals in the field. These people, through experience and specialized training, have acquired a degree of expertise in their specific areas. They will prove to be invaluable resources in the study of material culture.

Suggested Readings

American Association of Museums. **The Official Museum Directory.** Skokie, Ill. National Register Publishing Co., 1980.

Federation of Historical Services. **Handbook to Historical Resources in the Upper Hudson Valley.** Albany: Fort Orange Publishing Co., 1980/

Taylor, Joshua C. **Learning to Look.** Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.

Urban Schools Project. **The Worcester Sourcebook.** Sturbridge, Mass: Old Sturbridge, 1977.

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Historical Materials
and their Classroom Use

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